MODERN REVIEW

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With an Introduction by

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Introduction

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Introduction

The publication of the *Modern Review* was an effort to bring together leading figures of the international labor and Socialist movements to rethink the problems of Socialist theory in the post-World War II world. The decade of fascism and the half-decade of war had all but shattered the international socialist movement. The leadership of the major Socialist parties—German, French, Spanish, Dutch, Belgian, and Scandinavian—had been driven into exile, either in London or New York; the "delegations" of an earlier emigration—the Russian, Italian, East European, and Baltic parties—which had spent the decade of the twenties and thirties in Berlin or Paris, had followed these men into a second exile. Now, in the first flush of the post-war "reconstruction," it seemed as if the old capitalist order had itself been smashed and that western Europe, at least, would be rebuilt on democratic Socialist lines while the east European countries might be able to establish their own political independence on a Socialist basis. In England, France, Italy, Holland, Belgium, the Scandinavian countries, and in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Rumania, men who had plied petty occupations in exile were now sitting as ministers over the destiny of nations. Within this context, the *Modern Review* had high hopes of becoming an international forum for the discussion of Socialist problems.

The nominal editors of the *Modern Review* were Travers Clement, Lewis A. Coser, and George Denicke. One says "nominal" because even though these men carried out the editorial tasks of producing a monthly magazine, the moving spirit —in its conception and in raising funds—was Raphael Abramovitch, the leader in exile of the Russian Social Democratic Labor party, known popularly as the Mensheviks. A small, trim, erect man, with a well-shaped head and neat chin beard, Abramovitch (at that time sixty-seven years old) was one of that marvelous generation of Russian idealists who had suffered jail in their youth, brief glory as revolutionary leaders, and privation in exile, yet who continued to dedicate themselves selflessly—after thirty years of wandering it was all they had!—to ideas. History for them was not the history of the victors—how could it be, since they were the defeated—but of the "correct" interpretation of theory; and it was to that end that the *Modern Review* was dedicated.

The first group of active editors were themselves a mixed breed. Travers Clement, of old Yankee stock, was a veteran journalist who had been editor of the *Socialist Call,* and co-author (with his wife Lillian Symes) of the book *Rebel America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1934), which was a widely read and successful history of radicalism in America. Lewis Coser was a young Socialist, German-born, who had been active in left-wing groups first in Germany and

later as an emigre in Paris, and who had come to the United States, after a year of hiding in southern France, in the fall of 1941. Russian-born George Denicke (who also wrote under the name of George Decker) had left Russia in 1921 with the Menshevik delegation, and had been the assistant editor in Berlin of *Die Gesellschaft,* a German Socialist theoretical magazine edited by Rudolf Hilferding.

The first editorial board served to identify the sponsors, organizational and intellectual, of the magazine. These included Abramovitch, Max Danish, the editor of *Justice,* the weekly newspaper of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, which contributed most of the funds; John L. Childs, professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, and state chairman of the Liberal Party; Sidney Hook, professor of philosophy at New York University and the best known expositor of Marxist thought in the United States; and Robert M. MacIver, Lieber Professor of Political Philosophy and Sociology at Columbia University.

Although the magazine was edited in New York, its focus, clearly, was international and the overwhelming number of contributors, in the first two years at least, were either Europeans, or European Socialists living in the United States. The bulk of the articles, as can be readily seen, were devoted to Russia, to Socialist economic problems in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, and to theoretical questions such as the nature of totalitarianism and bureaucracy. But there were difficulties from the start. Two of the editors, Clement and Coser, were of left-wing Socialist persuasion, while Abramovitch was a right-winger.

The blow-up came in December, 1947, at the end of the first year of publication, when Clement and Coser printed an article by Harold Isaacs, "South Asia's Opportunity," which called on the Socialist movements of those countries to take a "third world" position lining up neither with the "capitalist anarchy" of the West nor the "totalitarian thralldom" of the Communist world. Abramovitch was appalled. For him, as he replied in the same issue, these were "obsolete Marxist formulations." The issue could only be between the democratic West and the Communist world, and no third position was possible. In consequence, Clement and Coser resigned, and in March, 1948, *Modern Review* was reorganized as a bimonthly with Abramovitch as editor.

This task, however, was quite difficult for him: he was, at that time, deeply engaged in political work because of the ferment among the Russian *emigres* as to possible social changes in the Soviet Union; he was responsible for the direction of the *Sozialistische Vestnik (Socialist Courier),* the official organ of the Menshevik group, which had been published regularly since 1921; he was a regular contributor to the *Jewish Daily Forward,* and the active editor of the *Jewish Encyclopedia,* the two activities which gave him a regular income; and he suffered, cruelly, from blinding migraine headaches which often incapacitated him for days at a time. He engaged as managing editor Julien Steinberg, who was also an associate editor of *The New Leader,* but Steinberg, a brilliant but mercurial young man, was of procrastinating habits and the magazine encountered publishing delays. By January, 1949, it ceased publication temporarily.

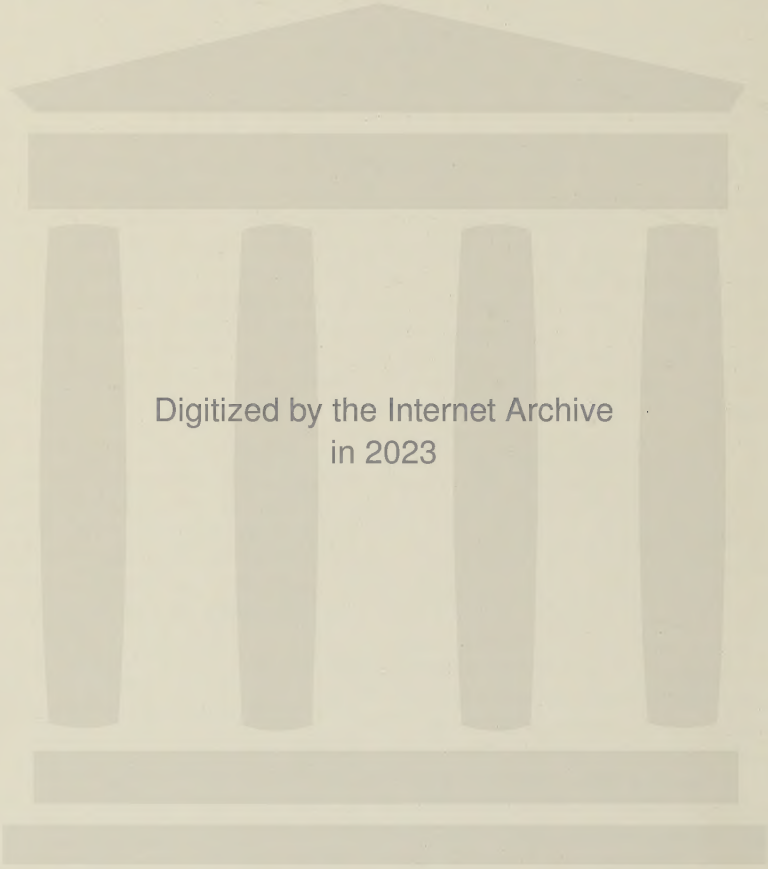
In the spring of 1949, Abramovitch asked me to join him as co-editor. I had known him for more than eight years, from the time I was managing editor of *The New Leader,* beginning in 1941. Jokingly, among our friends, I had been called America's youngest Menshevik because of my political affiliation with the group, going back to my teens. I had been teaching for three years at the University of Chicago and had just returned to New York, as a writer for *Fortune* magazine, and I welcomed the opportunity to remain active in intellectual journalism.

In our conversations, Abramovitch and I decided to convert the magazine into a quarterly, to seek for "weightier" articles, to invite younger writers, particularly academics, and to explore some of the philosophical and sociological currents which were becoming manifest at the time. Abramovitch was indulgent, but skeptical. "What is it that you want to write about?" he asked me on one occasion. I told him that as a result of the holacaust and the frightening aspects of human nature revealed by the war and the concentration camps, my friends had become interested in such thinkers as Niebuhr, Tillich, Barth, Kierkegaard, as well as in nineteenth-century historians such as Burckhardt, Acton, Tocqueville, and the like. I remarked that it might be interesting to go back to the old debates among Russian thinkers at the turn of the century, and run some articles on such interesting men—mystics and religious writers to be sure—as Vladimir Soloviev and Leo Shestov. "Soloviev and Shestov!" he asked in surprise, "Why, we *defeated* them in 1902!" (1902 was the year Abramovitch became active in the Russian Jewish Labor Bund, after being expelled from the Riga Polytechnical Institute for revolutionary activities.) Such was the unswerving political faith of the Russian Menshevik!

The *Modern Review* appeared for only two numbers in its new dress. There were now a number of more academically-inclined contributors such as the philosopher Hannah Arendt, the historian Gertrude Himmelfarb, and the sociologists Philip Rieff and Philip Selznick. The shift in focus to reflective rather than topical articles was evident as well. But a number of other difficulties had become apparent. Abramovitch had conceived of the magazine as providing a platform for himself and his group in international Socialist affairs, particularly if a reconstituted Labor and Socialist International would ever achieve importance, and he was less interested in a socio-philosophical journal. At my end, I found it hard to interest my friends in a Socialist journal. A non-commercial, "cultural" magazine, in the last analysis, can only be the product of a like-minded group of individuals who want a place to express their ideas. At the time most of my friends were engaged in starting their academic careers, and in writing for the professional and academic journals. The nineteen fifties was not a decade of vigorous political discussion. The demise of the *Modern Review* was an early signal of that fact.

Raphael Abramovitch died on April 11, 1963, three months short of his eighty-third birthday. A biographical memoir of this remarkable man can be found in my obituary minute in *The New Leader* of April 29, 1963, and in Sidney Hook's introduction to Abramovitch's *The Soviet Revolution* (New York: International Universities Press, 1962).

—Daniel Bell
New York, 1968



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STATEMENT

The Editors

One look at today's headlines in which world events and problems are featured as never before in our history and it becomes apparent that isolationism is dying and this is indeed one world insofar as the cables are concerned.

This evidence of the broadening world interest of the American people has inspired in part the launching of *Modern Review* at this time. It is our conviction that not only American readers but also an audience outside the United States, particularly in England and Canada, will welcome a serious international monthly edited from a new world point of view.

Published by the American Labor Conference on International Affairs, a research organization established in 1943 by a group of internationally-minded American labor leaders and progressives, *Modern Review* signalizes the first comprehensive effort of a significant section of organized labor in the U. S., and its liberal and democratic socialist allies here and abroad, to carry their views on world affairs to the public-at-large. This is not to imply that *Modern Review* sets itself up as the voice of organized labor. It is not even an "organ" of the Conference but is independent of any organization, party or government. It is designed as a free forum for those whose concern is not mere analysis of the moves of the Great Powers on the world chessboard but primarily what is happening to people, ordinary people of our globe. Its pages will be open particularly to new, as well as established, American writers who share this concern.

Another aspect of *Modern Review* marks a new departure. We are enlisting the co-operation of many writers and experts abroad who, when not in concentration camps, took an active part in the struggle for freedom and liberty. While some of them bear names long familiar in the U. S., others are young men and women who have come forward during or since the war. Also associated with this magazine are many of those men and women of special knowledge and talent that the totalitarian waves in Eastern and Central Europe have brought to our

shores and who have been struggling for freedom and against absolutism all their adult lives.

Broadly speaking, *Modern Review* establishes a new field for cooperation between Americans and Europeans in an attempt to work out a common approach to world problems. Should we succeed in infusing labor, liberal and progressive thought in America with the understanding of man's relationship to society that has emerged out of the sufferings abroad while projecting overseas such concepts of the rights and dignity of man as are rooted in the traditions of this country, we shall indeed have performed a service.

As in the years after the First World War, we face the task of world reconstruction — this time on a truly Herculean scale and under circumstances in which another failure would spell the doom of Western civilization. Out of the rubble and atomized dust of cities, of devastated countryside, of shattered economic and social patterns, of torn and bleeding lives must somehow arise a new world of peace, security and freedom for all. Man must again lift his head and face the future unafraid.

The policy of *Modern Review* is framed to further the fulfillment of this great task. Ideas are as much materials of reconstruction as are bricks and mortar.

We see or seek no solution outside the framework of world democracy. But democracy, like most general terms these days, needs re-defining as well as reaffirming. It must be given living content which will stir the hearts and minds of men and inspire voluntary participation and action by broad masses of people seeking a solution to their everyday problems.

We seek the unity of all truly progressive forces for reaffirmation and extension of the real values of our civilization and for defense of these values against the onslaughts of totalitarian barbarism. Conceived in the spirit of widest tolerance, this review will not be tolerant of the totalitarian evil. There shall be no compromise with Fascism, Communism, or older forms of reaction and tyranny.

Modern Review is dedicated to humanism in the sense that it is human beings who count, and systems exist for men, not men for systems.

COMMENT

Robbing the Pillars

There is a coal miner's phrase that is singularly graphic. Just before a mine is abandoned the huge pillars of coal that have been left standing to support the ceilings of the underground "rooms" are thinned as much as is dared in order to extract the last possible ton of coal. This exceedingly dangerous (to the coal-diggers) operation is called "robbing the pillars." As a result of it, coal mines occasionally cave in—sometimes years after they have been abandoned.

One is reminded of this phrase when reading the report on "Devastated Areas" issued late last year by the Economic and Social Council of the UN. It establishes a rough, though as yet incomplete, balance of war damages that Europe has suffered as a result of World War II. (No figures on Germany are given which would make the totals still more impressive.)

During the war years, Poland lost 17 per cent of her population, Yugoslavia 10.5 per cent, Greece 6.8 per cent. Thirty-five per cent of Poland's buildings were destroyed. Three thousand out of 9,000 Greek villages were almost totally razed. Twenty-four per cent of Yugoslavias fruit trees and 36 per cent of her vineyards were lost. Belgium lost 60 per cent of her pigs and one-fourth of her cattle. France had 50,000 commercial and industrial building demolished, 145,000 damaged. Almost the entire railway system of Holland was destroyed and that country temporarily lost the use of 219,000 hectares of land. It will be five years before normal yields can be restored on this soil.

So the figures continue—a nightmare of millions of corpses, ruined cities, blasted buildings, untilled fields and pastures on which no livestock grazes. But there are still worse forms of destruction which cannot be expressed in statistics. Who can estimate the ravages of the war years on the minds of children? Who can properly evaluate the legacy of moral collapse and spiritual decay left by the war? There exists no mathematical formula for the computation of human suffering.

The last two wars have been qualitatively different from the wars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their ravages have not been contained within "front" areas nor limited to combat personnel.

They have eaten their way into the very substance of the life of nations, undermining a whole spiritual and moral tradition which the West has built up through the ages. They have put a question mark after all the achievements which man had come, prior to 1914, to take more or less for granted.

War has eaten away at the most essential parts of the social organism. For a long time now human society, as in a critical malnutrition case, has been slowly feeding upon its own body tissues. One senses that the limit of endurance is being reached. Complete collapse of Western civilization may be averted this time perhaps. Much depends on what is done in relation to Germany. But will our civilization be able to withstand the ravages of a Third World War? One doubts it. We have been robbing the pillars long enough. Even if we succeed in "getting away" with it at the moment, it must be remembered that mines sometimes cave in years after the props have been thinned. This can happen to a whole civilization.

French Socialists and the Fourth Republic

The establishment of the Third Republic was decided on January 30, 1875 when, despite its monarchist majority, the French National Assembly by majority of one vote adopted the famous Wallon Amendment: "The President of the Republic is elected by . . . " The Republic was not directly proclaimed but it was decided that the Chief of State was to be called President of the Republic! The country, however, was already republican. One year later the first regular Chamber was elected with a strong republican majority.

Today practically the whole of France is republican. No less certain is the fact that Frenchmen desire not simple re-establishment of the Third but a new and better Republic. Nevertheless, the Constitution of the Fourth Republic failed to win consent of the majority. It was imposed on the people against the will of the majority by way of compromise between three big parties. The loyal majority for the new Constitution is a fictitious one. The authors of this compromise Constitution were unable to formulate it in such a way as to kindle the imagination of the French people.

In January the Fourth Republic began to function legally. The first impression is that nothing is changed in comparison with the political practices of two years of Provisional Governments. The Fourth Republic seems to have inherited all the worst features of the Third with its parliamentary "combines." Really new in postwar

French politics, however, is the fact that the entire parliamentary life is now dominated by the party machines. But during the "provisional" period it was the same. More significant is the relationship of political forces reflected in the composition of the Government. The President of the Republic and the Premier Minister (Chief of State and of Government) are Socialists. In the Government are nine Socialist ministers against five Communists, five Catholics (MRP), four Radicals, and, affiliated with them, two Independents (moderate Conservatives). The Government is composed as if the Socialists were the strongest party. Paradoxically, the position of the Socialists in Parliament became strong after their defeat in the last elections. And the explanation is also paradoxical: the Socialist position is strong because they are relatively weak.

The Socialists, of course, have the advantage of being an intermediate party between two big parties—Communists and Catholics. Therefore they are free in theory to adopt the policy of the "third force," with the choice of alliance now with the Communists, now with the Catholics. But the Socialists prefer not to use this advantage. They excluded the possibility of varying alliances by their decision not to participate in any government without the Communists. But neither of the two big parties wants a government dominated by the major rival party. Each seeks to prevent the other from strengthening its position sufficiently to acquire state power. Insofar as the Socialists are concerned, such a danger does not exist. For this reason both major parties supported a pure Socialist Government led by Leon Blum, and now accept a government under a Socialist Premier with relatively strong Socialist participation.

This position of the Socialist Party may have its advantages, but it is also exceedingly difficult and dangerous. The Socialists have the leadership and responsibility without being able in many respects to pursue the policy they wish to pursue. Especially in the field of foreign policy they are isolated on many questions. They cannot give French foreign policy an independent and essentially democratic orientation but only resist its subordination to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. They cannot change the prevailing attitude concerning Germany. Having always opposed the policy of so-called *grandeur* inaugurated by De Gaullists, they are forced nevertheless to make concessions to this policy, one of the chief aims of which is to maintain at all costs everything the Third Republic ever possessed. The situation in Indo-China, for instance, therefore places the Socialists in a really tragic position, because the necessities of the coalition do not allow

them to pursue their own colonial policy but force them rather to seek the least intolerable compromise between their aims and those of an intransigent majority. Whether, notwithstanding all this, leadership in the Government will enable the Socialists to gain strength depends in the long run on how much influence they can win outside Parliament, in the country and especially in the labor unions. To become a real power again in France, they will probably have to revise their general political line and re-establish real independence in relation to the Communists.

Elections in the Pickwickian Sense

If there is a science that stands in need of more general application to our everyday political problems, it is semantics. Webster defines the word "election" as "an act of choosing between alternatives," but the daily press tells us that something also called elections has taken place in Poland—a police state if there ever was one. The Polish electorate, according to statements of its present rulers, had in fact only one possibility which was to confirm these rulers in power.

According to the official report eighty-five per cent of the Polish electorate who went to the polls voted to be represented by the governmental bloc of parties, based primarily on the Polish Workers' (Communist) Party and a spurious Polish Socialist Party. But were there alternatives? An opposition party, the Polish Peasant Party was permitted to exist (or should we say vegetate?), but for many months it had been the target of a ruthlessly conducted and governmentally sponsored campaign of persecution. Its local organizations had been outlawed in many districts. So in these areas, at least, the voters were given no alternative whatever. Furthermore, a large number of its candidates were arrested by what is referred to (humorously no doubt) as the Polish *Security* Force. S. Wojcik, Secretary General of the Peasant Party, was in prison with a number of other top leaders.

Not only Peasant Party leaders, however, but a number of independent Socialists who either nominally had joined the official Socialist Party, or who had kept out of politics altogether, were also in jail. Antoni Wasik, member of the Supreme Council of the old real Socialist Party was arrested some time ago. Tadeusz Szturm de Sztrem, formerly Deputy Secretary General of the same organization, and Boleslaw Galaj, an outstanding Socialist leader of the anti-Nazi underground forces were taken into custody more recently. Zygmunt Zaremba, who in 1939 was chairman of the Workers' Committee for the Defense of

Warsaw and later a resistance leader, was forced to flee from Poland in spring of last year. The list could be lengthened at will.

President Bierut was not lacking at least in brutal frankness when he declared in his address to a delegation of University of Cracow professors recently: "If you don't go into the bloc, tears will be your lot and you will be beaten. We will use all means in our power to break you and smash you. . . ." That is the alternative in fact that was presented to the Polish voters.

Mass deportations, beating and killing of oppositionists, slander and blackmail, intimidation and outright falsification of votes—these were the means by which this monstrosity referred to as "a free and democratic election" was carried through. The means employed were indeed natural to the men who used them. Some of these men, among them President Bierut himself, were not even Polish citizens but Soviet citizens called from their Moscow lairs to rule over the Polish people, simple *gauleiters* ready to do any "job"! Others are shady characters of pre-war Poland's political underworld. The Minister of National Defense, General Rola-Zymierski, was thrown out of the Armament Department of the War Ministry during Pilsudski's regime not because of his shining democratic faith (he attacked the regime because it was not sufficiently anti-democratic and anti-Semitic to suit him) but simply for taking bribes from French armament manufacturers. Or take one Boleslaw Piasecki, for example, who is now chief of the pro-government Catholic group. Before the war he worked the other side of the street. He was, in fact, the official leader of the *Falanga,* the Fascist youth movement. He had his own storm troops and his own anti-Semitic press. He finally fell into the hands of the Russian NKVD and, as he himself states, after one night's conversation with an NKVD man found common cause with the Russians. He now publishes a "Catholic" weekly that advocates collaboration of Polish Catholics with the Government. But why continue? The enumeration would become tiresome.

It is not our task to give advice to the powers that be what to do about Poland. All we can do is to contribute to clarification of the issues and strive to make the American people aware of one fact: what has taken place is *not* an election but simply "legalization" of an existing state of affairs. The police regime found it necessary for reasons of foreign policy to go through the motions of an election. Hypocrisy has been defined as the tribute Vice pays to Virtue. That the Bieruts felt compelled to talk of "democratic elections" may thus be taken as an unconscious, back-handed tribute to democracy. As to

the rest, what we have witnessed is a farce—a farce that becomes tragic in one sense because many so-called liberals (of the Russia-can-do-no-wrong variety of course) will persist in taking it seriously. But the infinitely deeper tragedy is that the Polish people, not these "liberals," must foot the bill.

Frenchman's Burden

It is said that elephants continue to stand upright long after they are dead so it is sometimes difficult to tell a live elephant from a dead one.

This perhaps tall tale comes to mind when reading about the French campaign now being waged in Indo-China. One might be tempted to range this campaign among the long series of colonial wars France has waged in the past but for the fact that conditions have changed basically. The elephant, if not dead, is dying. Whatever the outcome of the present fighting in Indo-China, the days of the old French Empire in the East are numbered. The policy of *grandeur,* which meant maintaining the colonies at any price, no longer corresponds to realities and must necessarily be scrapped.

In colonial policy, the French have often proved singularly inept at the art of compromise—an art at which the British are past masters. In Indo-China (as was formerly the case in Syria and Lebanon), it appears that their rigidity may well cost them their influence completely, while a genuine willingness to compromise might have enabled them to retain at least some of it.

According to the agreement of March 6, 1946, "the French Government recognizes the Viet Nam Republic as a free state having its government, its parliament, its army and its finances forming a part of the Indo-Chinese Federation and of the French Union." Furthermore, the French Government pledged itself to hold a referendum in the south of Indo-China (Cochin-China) to determine whether its population wished to attach themselves to the Viet Nam Republic. Actually, however, the French proclaimed an autonomous Republic of Cochin-China on June 1st with a cabinet responsible to the French High Commissioner, a set-up apparently enjoying almost no popular support. In addition, France sent to Indo-China men of the stamp of Admiral d'Argenlieu and General Leclerc who are associated in the minds of the Indo-Chinese with brutal repression and the reactionary designs of the large planters, mining and banking interests.

The French Army has never succeeded in "pacifying" the country.

It is clear that "mopping up operations" have been continuing all along. A number of interim agreements have been concluded between the French and Viet Nam, but negotiations have resulted in repeated deadlocks. Open conflict became unavoidable between the French who wished to keep the whole country tied to France and the Indo-Chinese who demanded a fully independent state which would include all Annamese lands.

Heavy fighting has now occurred, the French claiming they have been treacherously attacked, Viet Nam countering with the charge that they were provoked. President Ho Shi-Minh, in a New Year's message over the Viet Nam radio, sent out peace-feelers. But Marius Moutet, the French colonial minister, announced after his visit to Hanoi that although he had hoped for a peaceful solution, he had been disappointed and is now convinced that a military decision will be necessary. Indications are that M. Moutet wanted a decent settlement but allowed his hand to be forced by the military. French military spokesmen stress that they have "the situation well in hand" since they are able to control all key points. But it appears doubtful that the French will be able to extend their control from the fortified centers to the countryside by anything less than a major colonial war.

Observers raise the question whether the Viet Nam government is Communist. There is certainly strong Communist influence at work among the Viet Namese—an influence which embraces President Ho Shi-Minh. Yet Viet Minh, the governmental party, was created in 1941 as a resistance movement against the Japanese at a time when the Russian-Japanese pact precluded the Communists from taking any active part in it and is the fruit of various compromises and coalition tendencies of a number of Indo-Chinese parties and groups. It is the offspring of the old nationalist movement and resistant groups which were already active in 1940. Though at times influenced by Communists, Viet Minh and its predecessors have always had a special character of their own. Furthermore, it must be remembered that almost since its inception Viet Nam has received aid and comfort from the Chinese Government of Chiang Kai-shek who is certainly not inclined to foster a Communist State at China's backdoor.

During the short period of its existence, Viet Nam has waged a vigorous campaign against illiteracy, which during the French regime never dropped below 80 per cent. Plans have been made for village committees, elected by universal suffrage, to form the basis of a new administrative structure, new agricultural techniques have been introduced, etc. All these reforms have remained fragmentary as their suc-

cess is dependent upon a peaceful solution of the Indo-Chinese problem as a whole.

The door for a compromise between France and Viet Nam is still open but intransigence and stubbornness may slam it shut. Nowadays more than histrionics and a few thousand picked colonial troops are necessary to wage a colonial war against a whole people. All Asia is in ferment. The only possible way to combat Communist influence and the danger of ultimate Stalinist control in the East is to bring about a new equilibrium and new relationships, based on self-government and freedom, between the European countries and their former colonial possessions.

Miners, Too, Are People

Now that there is no immediate crisis in the coal fields and John L. Lewis has apparently retired to his dressing-room before the curtain rises for Act III, it seems an appropriate occasion for a calm appraisal of the coal situation in the U.S. as it relates to the coal diggers themselves.

Strange that in mentioning coal one need stress the point that attention is due the men who dig it. Yet, when a wave of hysteria swept this country recently, not only the so-called reactionary press but many writers and columnists ranging all the way from mild to extreme Left apparently lost sight of the fact completely that the coal strike had roots other than in John L's domineering habits, his power instincts and love for the more bombastic stage tricks of the Shakespearean theater.

The commentators harped on the "high wages" the miners are said to enjoy. It is true that the miners' weekly average earnings last summer were higher than in most manufacturing industry. What these commentators usually failed to add, however, was that this high weekly average resulted from many hours of overtime, entailing excessive drain on the miners' physical reserves. The miners' hourly wage, which offers the only meaningful standard of comparison, is below that of a number of industries such as rubber tire manufacturing, newspaper printing, etc.

It should be obvious that the miners, who have known long periods of disastrous unemployment, whose average weekly earnings as late as 1939 were only $23.88, should feel apprehensive about a prosperity based not on regular hourly rates but on overtime. Clearly such earnings could fall rapidly once the present abnormal need for coal

subsides. Besides, no one can live on averages. There are whole categories of men who work in the mines that draw considerably less than average. A spread of approximately 25 per cent, for example, exists between the hourly rate of a rock driller and that of a switch thrower. In addition most miners have to pay for explosives and other supplies out of their own pockets.

All these wage considerations become relatively unimportant, however, when the following facts are considered. The accident rate in American mines is four times that in the mines of Great Britain. A man who works ten years in a coal mine has practically no chance, statistically speaking, of avoiding a disabling injury and his risk of losing his life is great indeed. In the four war years 264,702 miners were killed or injured in coal accidents (5,294 killed); that is, 50 per cent of the peak number employed were killed or injured. Out of 11,474,000 men who went overseas in our armed forces, only 8 per cent were killed, wounded, or reported missing. Whereas the total rate of accidents per million man-hours worked is 63.9 in the bituminous coal fields, it is only 8.7 in steel mills, 11.1 in petroleum refining and 10.6 in aircraft engine manufacture. There are 1.23 fatal accidents per million man-hours worked in the coal mines, whereas the accident death rate in aircraft engine production is .029, in petroleum refining .120 and .14 in steel mills. The tuberculosis rate among miners is three times the normal rate; deaths from pneumonia are five times normal.

Lack of hygienic facilities in the mining towns, inadequate medical care, high prices in the company stores, the dirt and misery in which the miners are forced to bring up their usually large families,—all these matters have been mentioned so often one hesitates to bring them up again at this late date.

When one realizes that for decades the miners were considered the lowliest of the lowly, that those who dug coal with the greatest danger to life and limb were among the worst paid workers, when one recalls the disastrous years of unemployment during which naked misery stalked the coal patches and that during the 'twenties employment in the mines was usually contingent upon signing "yellow-dog" contracts under which the workers agreed not to join a union, it becomes understandable, perhaps, why the coal diggers stick to their organization. The point is not that John L. Lewis commands the army of miners as a general commands a drafted army. Lewis is much more a creature of the union than the coal miners are creatures of Lewis. That Lewis' regime presents many undemocratic aspects no one in his senses will deny. Yet it must never be forgotten that it is the experience of

many years of ineffectual unionization, of internecine struggle that makes the miners stick to the man who has wrought the United Mine Workers into a unified, fighting organization that has won tremendous gains for its members.

The coal miners deserve pay far above the average to compensate them for the unusual risks they take, for the dirty and disagreeable work they do, for the inhuman living conditions under which they and their families are forced to live.

One may suggest that if some of those who have written recently on coal were to take a week off and go into the coal fields, they might succeed in shaking off the hypnotic effects of John L's bushy eyebrows and come up with a more meaningful analysis of the coal problem.

This is not the place to go into the intricacies of the proceedings now before the U.S. Supreme Court. We shall discuss that matter in due course. Meanwhile it seems necessary to state that the case of the miners is not simply the case of John L. Lewis as the hit-and-miss chatter boys of the press would have us believe. Miners, too, are people.

MAHATMA GANDHI AND GENERALISSIMO STALIN

Louis Fischer

I suppose the average American or European, if asked about Mahatma Gandhi, would summarize his knowledge as follows: Gandhi is a thin, brown toothless Indian, dressed in a diaper, who lives on goat's milk and vegetables, fasts frequently, and has been twisting the British lion's tail for a quarter of a century inside and outside of jail.

Many would add: Gandhi is the leading champion of India's freedom who believes in pacifism and non-violence.

When Gandhi's non-violence is translated into life, however, it becomes much more than negative abstention. It becomes a rather startling and radical philosophy.

Last summer Gandhi was living in a village called Uruli, a typical, poor, unhappy Indian village. One night thieves broke into a peasant's hut, beat him, and stole his few possessions. The next morning the victim was brought before the Mahatma. What to do?

Gandhi said there were three ways of dealing with the matter. One was the "stereotyped, orthodox way" of reporting to the police. Very often, he declared, this merely provided the police with a further opportunity for corruption; it rarely gave relief to the victim. The second way, the one usually adopted by helpless villagers, was to do nothing. "This is reprehensible," Gandhi said. "It is rooted in cowardice, and crimes will flourish as long as cowardice remains."

Gandhi's way of dealing with thieves is "Satyagraha," non-violence. "This requires you," he told the assembled peasants, "to treat even thieves and criminals as your brothers and sisters, and to treat the crime as a disease which has infected its victims who must be cured."

The criminal, Gandhi advised, must be taught a trade and provided with the means of transforming his life. "You must realize," the Mahatma suggested, "that the thief or criminal is not a different being from yourselves. Indeed, if you turn the searchlight inward and

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look closely into your souls you might find that the difference between the thief and yourself is only one of degree."

Then Gandhi uttered this broad dictum: "The rich, moneyed man who makes his riches by exploitation or by other questionable means is no less guilty of robbery than the thief who picked a pocket or broke into a house. Only the former takes refuge behind the facade of respectability and escapes the penalty of the law."

"Strictly speaking," Gandhi remarked, "all amassing or hoarding of wealth above and beyond one's legitimate requirements is theft. There would be no occasion for theft, and therefore no thieves, if there were wise regulation of wealth and absolute social justice."

Thus Gandhi's non-violence leads him to egalitarian socialism. Indeed, Gandhi told me last summer that he has always regarded himself a socialist.

Gandhi, however, diverges from many of today's Socialists in that he dislikes government. He would avoid the state and change the individual. "Don't report to the police," he told the peasants of Uruli. "A reformer cannot afford to be an informer." But the Soviet regime expects sons and daughters to inform on their parents. Gandhi, whose knowledge of man has not diminished his faith in man, hopes to cure the thief. In the 1930's, Moscow introduced the death sentence for child criminals.

Governments, and especially dictatorships, have faith in force. Gandhi believes in the effectiveness of abstaining from the use of force. Eschew compulsion, is Gandhi's idealistic rule. "The mind of a man who remains good under compulsion cannot improve, in fact it worsens," Gandhi asserts. "And when compulsion is removed all the defects well up to the surface with even greater force."

Gandhi believes in improving the system by improving man. His approach to world problems, and India's problems, is through the enrichment and purification of human personality.

Gandhi is a democrat because he respects man and is scrupulous about means. A friend once asked Gandhi whether on occasions it might not be necessary "to compromise ideals with expediency." "No, never," Gandhi replied, "I do not believe that the end justifies the means."

Gandhi said to me, "I have striven all my life for the liberation of India. But if I had to get it by violence I would not want it." The totalitarian, on other hand, will use any means to achieve his end.

The means is, usually, man himself. Hence, the democrat exalts the individual; the dictator sacrifices the individual. The dictator sacri-

fices the individual in the alleged interest of the individual. Man's welfare is the end, but in the pursuit of that end man disappears into the maw of the impersonal state.

Gandhi is opposed to industrialization and bigness. He loves the simple village life. But, as a concession, he writes, "I would have state ownership where a large number of people work together." They will own the product of their labor. The state, however, must be based on non-violence. "I would not dispossess moneyed men by force," Gandhi says, "but would invite their cooperation in the process of conversion to state ownership. There are no pariahs in society, whether they are millionaires or paupers. The two are sores of the same disease."

Gandhi, trusting man's divine spark, would exorcise capitalism and theft by voluntary methods and reduce the prerogative of the state to a minimum. He regards the state as an instrument of violence; he would use it as little as possible and then, preferably, to support something undertaken by popular initiative.

Sitting on the ground of his mud hut, the Mahatma once described his self-rule ideal for each of India's 700,000 lowly villages. "That would be a Soviet system," I commented.

"I do not object," he replied.

The tragedy is that as time passed the Russian regime became less soviet and more government. The central government robbed the local soviets of their democratic authority and concentrated all power within the Kremlin's battlements. Stalin could do that because the Soviet government, based on a one-party system, is the triune executive, judiciary, and legislature, the owner and operator of all economic enterprises, and master of the ubiquitous, omnipresent secret police.

Gandhi would keep authority at the base of the political pyramid and there ask each individual and each group to grope for solutions. But under the Soviets, authority is highly concentrated in the peak of the pyramid.

The saddest failure in the Soviet Union is the gradual, and now almost total disappearance of popular participation in even the mechanics, let alone the actuality, of control over the government. The soviets have become bureaucratic administrations; the cooperatives are government stores; collective bargaining ended in 1935 and now the manager or director hires, fires and fixes wages; the collective farms are that in name only. In fact they are state-run institutions. This is the complete negation of economic democracy. The Soviet system is economic, as well as political, autocracy.

The aim of all Soviet education is 1) technical proficiency, 2)

blind approval of leadership. No Soviet leader, indeed no dictator, has once said, what Gandhi frequently says, "I am never sure I am right."

The result is that Stalin gets fearful obedience while Gandhi gets love and loyalty.

The greatest antithesis in modern politics is that between Asiatic Generalissimo Stalin, Bolshevik dictator, ruler of all the Russias, and Asiatic Mahatma Gandhi, saint, statesman, seer, socialist, and pacifist. They are separated by divergent attitudes towards men and means. At a meeting recently, Gandhi was asked for a comment on Indian Communists. "It seems," he replied, "they do not make any distinction between fair and foul, between truth and falsehood. They deny the charge. But their reported acts seem to sustain it."

Communists have no respect for the truth. They distort words. Their words are not free. Their words serve ends. Word-slavery destroys democracy. To the extent that democracy enslaves words, men, and minds, it is totalitarian and loses its capacity to defend itself against totalitarianism. The more gandhiesque a democracy the less stalinist it will become.

Democracies should inscribe on tablets of stone a list of the characteristics of dictatorship and add: "Thou shalt not succumb to these." The characteristics are: glorification of the infallible leader ("Heil Hitler," the adulation of Stalin, "Duce, Duce, Duce," "Franco, Franco, Franco," "Tito, Tito, Tito"), intolerance of political differences, frequent use of force to punish and terrorize, exaltation of force, refusal to forgive no matter how great the penance and punishment, discouragement of independent thinking or doing, disloyalty to persons, insistence on abject loyalty to the state, public obeisance to official dogma and official authority, conformity, uniformity, absolutism of thought (one's own system can never be wrong, the other fellow's is never right), indifference to the regime's cost in lives, happiness, and morals; unscrupulousness in the pursuit of a goal, cynicism, unbridled attacks on outsiders and unbelievers, distortion of history, lying about the present, incessant propaganda at home and abroad about the virtues of the system, irritation over foreign criticism, secrecy, inaccessibility of leaders to the public, encouragement of big families, maintenance of big armies, desire for conquest and expansion, fear of appearing weak, resistance to change, frequent shifting of officials and broad opportunities, therefore, for young and new men, progressive limitation of individual liberty, subjugation of trade unions to the state, exaggeration of foreign hostility to strengthen domestic patri-

otism, antagonism to all domestic sources of rival political power and popularity, political impotence of everybody except the dictator and the secret police, subordination of the judiciary and legislature to the executive, personal insecurity, disregard of constitutions and laws, use of "circusses," parades, ceremonies, expeditions, etc. to divert the masses, complete dependence of the individual on the state, readiness of the individual to curry favor with the state even at the expense of conscience, ultimate atrophy of conscience,—in a word, the aggrandizement of governments and the helplessness of persons.

Democracy's chief purpose, on the other hand, is the development of the individual with the aid of the state but with curbs on the state lest it crush or squeeze the individual.

Democracy should protect the majority against a minority, minorities against the majority, and minorities from one another.

Democracy is the right to speak, worship, assemble and vote. Democracy is also the right to a job, to free education, to social security, and to old-age pensions.

Democracy is the right to criticise and remove the government and every member of the government; democracy means inalienable rights under law. In Russia, individuals enjoy certain benefits and privileges. But they are the gift of the dictatorship. They can therefore be withdrawn, and on occasions have been withdrawn, by the dictatorship. This means that there are no rights; there is no law. The omnipotent state, having liquidated all other sources of power, is a law unto itself. Where the dictator counts for everything the individual counts for nothing.

Nature, prodded by science, has given man more power than he ever possessed.The development of science thus increases the possibility of the enslavement of man by the state and by agglomerations of economic power. The cave man with a club had power over one person or ten persons. The dictator who controls the press, radio, school system, secret police, government apparatus and economic system, can dominate a hundred million persons. The medieval artisan hired two apprentices. The automobile manufacturer hires hundreds of thousands of workers. One capitalist may have more influence over more men than an entire government in the Middle Ages.

Thanks to the advance of civilization the average individual needs more protection and gets less. This is the great unsolved dilemma of the modern age.

Man is helpless without the state and without large economic

enterprises; yet he can be reduced to helplessness by them. What to do?

"Power corrupts," said Lord Acton, a British historian, "and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Modern totalitarian dictatorships have demonstrated the dangers that inhere in concentrated government authority. No dictator in a major European or Asiatic nation has been voted out of office. The dictator is permanent boss and he tolerates around him only helpful yesmen. As a result, freedom languishes, hypocrisy flourishes, and peace is imperilled.

In Bolshevik theory, the state is an instrument used by the upper class to exploit the working class. It follows, Marx and Lenin declared, that when the owning classes are liquidated and the working class takes power the state will wither away. The Russian state, however, is the most powerful and ubiquitous in the world because a new Soviet upper class, which controls the means of production, exploits the working class. The discrepancy between the highest paid and the lowest paid in the Soviet Union is greater than in any capitalist country. Stalin has nurtured an aristocracy which serves as his bureaucracy and lives well at the expense of the masses.

Those who love freedom fear the omnipotent state.

The goal of Socialism is not to socialize or nationalize all industry; the goal of Socialism is to make the individual free and happy and the world free and peaceful. Many thinkers used to assume that it sufficed to expropriate the capitalist and transfer his plant to the state. But if the state thereby becomes a monster—a monster in size and cruelty—what has man gained?

For man is not only the means; he is also the end. The state is not the end.

In Russia, the state has become the sole capitalist; from this flows exploitation, oppression, and imperialism. The alternative for the modern western world is, obviously, not Gandhi's spinning-wheel economy. The evil is monopoly, government monopoly as well as private monopoly, for both reduce the individual and even masses of individuals to the status of helpless robots. Wall Street, the London City and the Kremlin are equally abhorrent symbols of power citadels.

The cure is the diffusion of economic power and political power.

Ownership and operation of the means of production should not be the exclusive prerogative of the federal government or of private corporations. Ownership and operation should be divided among federal government, state or provincial governments, county governments, city governments, cooperatives, private companies, and private indi-

viduals. The whole amounts to a Mixed Economy with democratic over-all planning in which each of the components participates.

The wide distribution of economic power would prevent political dictatorship and encourage initiative and activity by the largest numbers. That would be economic democracy fortified by political democracy.

However, the changing of forms and the alteration of the balance of economic power, though extremely important and indispensable, cannot produce a just society unless accompanied by a new and higher personal morality. It used to be thought that this improvement in morality would result automatically from the end of capitalism. Soviet experience is an argument against this thesis. Soviet society is impressively immoral. "Morality?" says a character in *Unknown Artist,* a Soviet novel by V. Kaverin published in 1931, "I have no time to think of the word. I am busy. I am building socialism. But if I had to choose between morality and a pair of trousers, I would choose the trousers." He would choose the trousers not merely because trousers are in short supply but because morality is low-priced. How can it be otherwise where the end justifies the means, where the lie is an official weapon, and where terror puts a premium on safety-at-any-price?

Soviet experience is not conclusive. But it is a warning—especially when one observes the acts of non-Russian Communists who are no less unscrupulous than their Moscovite trainers. Karl Marx enslaved by Peter the Great becomes a perversion. Marx in friendship with Mahatma Gandhi might lead towards a millennium. New social and economic molds must be supplemented by a simultaneous purification of persons.

Essentially, the crisis of our era is moral. We live in an immoral world that has lost much of its capacity for indignation. This, more than anything, explains the failure of politicians.

Humanity needs an alliance between politics and principle. Usually they are strangers; often they are enemies. Mahatma Gandhi is an example, almost unique, of the union of statesmanship and spirit.

The rescue of democracy from the dangers besetting it is, above all, a moral undertaking which must start with each individual. Peace and democracy, like charity, begin at home—in the hearts of men.

THE CRISIS IN ITALIAN SOCIALISM

Giuseppe Faravelli

Comment in the international socialist press (to say nothing of the confused reports in the general press) indicate that the reasons for the split in the Italian socialist movement are not fully understood outside Italy. This is scarcely surprising since even many Italian Socialists have been left bewildered by the tragic event.

The question of the split came to a head suddenly on the eve of the Socialist Party convention in Rome and caught unawares many Socialists, forcing them (almost brutally it seemed) to a decision. Naturally, there were some who anticipated its coming. If it is permissable to quote oneself, I should like to call attention to the fact that as far back as last May, commenting in *Critica Sociale* on the prior convention in Florence, I wrote: "... it is easy to prophesy that shortly the old formulation of Giacomo Matteotti will again be applicable: 'Socialists with the Socialists, Communists with the Communists.'" These words went unheeded — or rather were brushed aside as the ravings of a tormented Cassandra.

The split, therefore, appears to some critics as an unnatural event forced by the whim (or worse) of exponents of *Critica Sociale* and *Iniziativa Socialista,* the two factions which together composed the minority at Rome. These two groups have been blamed for the split and charged with giving up a struggle within the party which they might have won.

This, to put it mildly, is far from an accurate view of the situation. We must bear in mind that the struggle for control of the late Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (P.S.I.U.P.) had nothing in common with the traditional struggles (reformists vs. revolutionists, etc.) that occurred in the movement prior to World War I. Al-

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GIUSEPPE FARAVELLI, operating from Switzerland as the member of the Central Committee of the Italian Socialist Party in charge of underground work, was one of the chief organizers of the Italian resistance movement against Italian Fascism. He was arrested following the fall of France by Vichy police in France and handed over to Mussolini, who saw to it that he received the maximum jail sentence. Today he is one of the moving spirits behind *Critica Sociale,* a magazine which is a rallying center for Italian Socialists who are fighting to preserve the independence of the Italian Socialist movement and one of the outstanding leaders of the new Socialist Party of Italian Workers.

though sharply divided in their appraisal of political problems and the solution to them, the various tendencies within the old movement agreed nevertheless on the fundamental outlines of a socialist program. Nor did the recent struggle have anything in common with that which arose after World War I between Social Democrats, Maximalists, and the Communists of that day. Although these factions fought bitterly among themselves, disagreeing even on basic principles, the struggle was conducted openly and above board with some consideration for democratic rights and procedures.

The fight which was unleashed recently in the P.S.I.U.P., however, was of a different order. This was a fight between Socialists who remained loyal to Marxist Socialism and Democracy and who were determined to safeguard the independence of the Party, and a fifth column headed by political adventurers and aided and abetted by similar elements outside Italy. The aim of this fifth column was to render the Party subservient to foreign interests — interests neither Italian nor Socialist. What they sought was liquidation of the Party as a Socialist party.

This fifth column operated with all the familiar techniques employed by Stalinist totalitarians everywhere — bribing, corrupting, instituting ideological terrorism. It cloaked its real intentions behind the usual series of false fronts, maneuvers and opportunistic phrases. It exploited without scruple the utopian inclinations of the masses, who, oppressed with the general social regression left in the wake of Fascism and war, were unusually susceptible to demagoguery. By a tenacious and underhanded process it gradually subjected sections of the Party to its will, particularly the great labor and peasant federations of Northern Italy.

This process, greatly accelerated after the Florence convention, culminated in sudden developments which forced the Socialists to a decision. As the time for the Rome convention drew near, the fifth column did not hesitate to use all means ("legal and illegal" as one of their spokesmen expressed it) to insure a voting majority. The documentary evidence of these "Balkan" methods were laid before the tribune of the convention by Matteo Matteotti, who demanded revocation of the convention itself in the name of the minority.

One fact — inexplicable except in terms of ruthless machine politics — emerged. The same fifth column which at Florence, when its apparatus was still incomplete, was defeated by those of us who advocated autonomy for the Party was able to present itself a few months later in Rome with an overwhelming majority. And this despite the

political defeats the Party had suffered meanwhile under its leadership, in the amnesty campaign, the administrative elections, etc.!

Thus the minority was confronted with a startlingly clear revelation of the fact that a totalitarian apparatus was now firmly in the saddle. This apparatus had smashed the democratic pact which permitted diverse socialist currents to coexist within the Party. It had violated the principles of solidarity and liberty which are the *sine qua non* of any civil alliance. The minority realized that the pressure of the totalitarian apparatus, which had paralyzed the normal functioning of the Party, was now prepared to smother any form of resistance. It either had to submit and thus become an accomplice to an unrelenting policy destined to sacrifice the interests of democracy and the working class, or secede and by this act remove from the orbit of the already corrupted section of the Party those who had not yet been contaminated by the totalitarian ideology. Only by choice of the latter alternative was it possible to give life to a true Socialist party of the Italian workers.

The politics to which the minority refused to become an accomplice were revealed in a careless moment shortly before the Rome convention by none other than the "president" of the Party and head of the fifth column, Pietro Nenni. In an electoral speech at Spezia, Nenni declared that the unity of action pact was the instrument that would permit the two "allied" parties (the Socialist and Communist parties) to win and exercise power without any secondary alliances with bourgeois parties. It was also to be the instrument, Nenni declared, to institute an "economic democracy" of the Soviet type.

But what would this vague "power" be actually, providing it could gain power which is to be doubted? Based on Communist totalitarianism, spiritually as well as materially monolithic, and a captive Socialist Party infiltrated by Stalinist fifth columnists and deserted by the masses, it would be nothing more than a disguised dictatorship of the type of the present "popular" governments in the Balkans. These profess to be coalition governments but are simply puppet set-ups for manipulation at the hands of the Communists and the indefatigable NKVD. This power would be shackled to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and would fail utterly, therefore, in the field in which above all Socialists must ultimately justify themselves; i.e., in the field of foreign policy through implementing a socialist policy in international relations.

The *Critica Sociale* and *Iniziativa Socialista* groups by and large have not hesitated in their choice. It is a courageous one and not to

be regretted. Nevertheless, they have been criticized from some quarters for refusing to continue a fight within the party on the assumption that they would have emerged victorious from such a struggle. This assumption has absolutely no foundation in fact. Not only would they have been unable to improve their position, they would have been crushed completely by the totalitarian apparatus.

Today the Italian working class finally possesses the political instrument which it lacked — the Socialist Party of Italian Workers (P.S.L.I.). The P.S.L.I. emerges on the Italian political scene as a party of the working class. Those who fear that it might become lost in a welter of bourgeois reformism as was the case with the unfortunate movement sponsored by Bissolati and Bonomi after the Socialist split of 1912 demonstrate that they do not understand the profound meaning of the recent split.

The P.S.L.I. has been launched for the purpose of resolving the problems of the Italian workers, to wrest them from the stranglehold of Stalinism and win them back to the concept of democratic Socialism. Its aim is to restore to the working class its sense of independence and a consciousness of its historic role which is that of representing the universal interests of society and hence of the legitimate interests of all classes of labor, neglected or oppressed by capitalism. Only if this is accomplished can Italy be reborn.

The P.S.L.I. proposes to stimulate a general reawakening of consciousness on the part of the working class — a reawakening which will lead to a radical renovation of Italian politics and to the solution — within the orbit of republican and democratic institutions — of those vital problems which cannot be postponed without danger of plunging all Italy into bankruptcy, chaos and social collapse.

Rebuild Italy! The old motto of Filippo Turati is again inscribed on our banner to which rally the most militant workers, peasants, artisans and intellectuals from north and south.

The P.S.L.I. is born among infinite difficulties but yet under glorious auspices. Communists and fusionists have declared war on it, stating that they will block its advance among the workers. But unless, contrary to our conviction, it is fatally predestined that Socialism is to be submerged by the wave of Stalinist totalitarianism and that Italy is to be reduced to the rank of Balkan "republic," we shall advance. *Passeremo!*

AMERICAN LIBERALISM TODAY

John L. Childs

The close of the war and the death of President Roosevelt clearly mark the end of a period in the political life of the United States. Under the administration of President Truman the group of progressives who rallied around Roosevelt to develop the New Deal has rapidly disintegrated. As these amateurs left or were driven from their positions of leadership, the Democratic Party, with mingled feelings of relief and regret, returned to the routines of machine politics.

The Republicans, campaigning under the slogan, "have you had enough," coasted last November to an easy victory in the first American postwar election. As a result, they now control both the House and the Senate in the present Congress. Many fear that the postwar reaction will carry the Republicans to an even more decisive triumph over Truman and his professional associates in the Presidential election of 1948. For the moment, the American labor-liberal forces are giving first attention, not to the unpromising prospect of 1948, but to an effort to preserve against the attacks of the reactionaries the progressive legislation enacted during the Roosevelt period.

Thus the forward movement of the New Deal has been halted, and it seems to have spent itself as an organized political entity. The new directions and organs of the labor-liberal political forces for the postwar period remain to be determined. Obviously, any future American liberal movement will be much influenced by the developments which came under the New Deal. I shall therefore open my discussion of the future of American liberalism with an appraisal of the Roosevelt administration.

1. The New Deal Failed to Achieve a Political Re-Alignment

From the standpoint of political parties the situation has been

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improved little, if at all, by the four terms of the Roosevelt forces. The Democratic Party is dominated today by essentially the same groups which were in charge before Roosevelt and the New Deal gained the ascendancy. Undoubtedly as a Party it includes in its rank and file membership many more plain citizens, or working people, than its Republican rival. On the other hand, the actual control of the Democratic Party continues in the hands of the bosses who through their well organized machines literally make a private business out of the public affairs of the nation. In the South, these bosses, in the main, are the products of the poll-tax, feudal practices which have been evolved to protect the supremacy of the white-man; in the North, they are the products of the patronage machines which manipulate the low-income, nationality and religious groups of the large industrial centers. During the second half of the New Deal, the trade union leaders were in active competition with the political bosses for the political leadership of these industrial and office workers.

Liberals, however, are less confident today than they have been for many years that the effort to break the control of these bosses so that the Democratic Party can be transformed into an honest, progressive political instrumentality will succeed in any foreseeable future. Certainly the heritage from the New Deal, so far as the Democratic Party is concerned, is not at all encouraging. Roosevelt's marvellous vote-getting ability won him the loyal support of many of the regular Democratic leaders, but he did not succeed in changing the character of the Party's leadership in very many localities or states. The bosses dutifully mobilized their forces for the broader political objectives of Roosevelt, but they continued to make patronage and power their primary interests.

But this failure to develop a New Deal Party does not mean that the Roosevelt movement made no permanent contribution to the cause of liberalism in the United States. Although the Democratic Party is much today what it was in 1932 when Roosevelt was first elected President, I consider that in certain definite respects his contribution to the development of a liberal American political movement was foundational. Granting that the New Deal was opportunistic both in its relations with the Democratic Party, and in its failure to develop a consistent, clearly formulated program for national economic reconstruction, we err seriously if we do not perceive that it has profoundly modified the basic outlook of the American people, and that it has also brought about a much more hopeful balance of forces in American political life. Indeed, the prospect of a peaceful, democratic resolution

of the urgent problems of industrial America has been vastly strengthened because of these more fundamental effects of the Roosevelt program.

2. *The Deeper Achievements of the New Deal*

I shall summarize five major ways in which I think that Roosevelt has advanced the cause of liberalism in American politics.

In the first place, during the Roosevelt period, and partly as direct consequence of the achievements of the New Deal, most of the common people of America abandoned their historic faith in *laissez-faire* economics. To be sure, they may support, so long as full employment continues, those who are against the maintenance of governmental controls in the peace-time economy. But both industrialists and professional politicians are well aware that neither urban, nor rural, America will ever again submit to a Government which sits idly by while the impersonal forces of the market paralyze national production. Faith in the method of overcoming a depression by the slow and ruthless process of deflation has been destroyed. Propaganda of radio, press, platform, and moving pictures will not dispose the common people to suffer scarcity in the midst of potential plenty. Given depression, and the threat of mass unemployment, and they will surely demand bold action by the Federal government to meet the situation. This repudiation of *laissez-faire* economics for a system of welfare economics, achieved by deliberate governmental regulation of the economy, signifies a revolutionary change in the outlook of the American people.

In the second place, through the bitter struggle over the Supreme Court—a struggle that Roosevelt won in substance, if not in form—a new and necessary flexibility was introduced into the constitutional structure of the American system. As a result, the Supreme Court has declined in prestige, and this change in its status was required if the spirit and the methods of liberalism were to prevail in the public affairs of our country. Today, the American people realize that decisions of the Supreme Court are not pronouncements of an impersonal and immutable law, but are rather the opinions of ordinary human beings conditioned by a mundane experience. To Roosevelt must be given the credit for having made it constitutional to use the full resources of government to promote the general welfare, even when this involves revisions in traditional conceptions of the rights and privileges of the owner. This bringing of the forms of property under the control of the legislative will of the people was a foundational step in the strengthening of the cause of American liberalism.

In the third place, the Roosevelt program has greatly strengthened organized labor in the United States. The policies of the New Deal have not only vastly extended the numbers enrolled in the movement of organized labor; they have also given labor a much more secure legal and social position. As a result, the distribution of power—economic and political—has been so modified that the workers are now on a more equal basis than they have been for over a generation. The Wagner Labor Act is an historic landmark in the long struggle to make democracy a reality in the economic as well as in the political sphere. It is difficult for anyone who knows the principles contained in this law, and the positive results it has produced in the daily experience of millions of workers, to hold to the dogma that the State is, by nature, an instrument of the owning or exploiting class. The New Deal through its deeds has encouraged the American people to believe that the State is rather what it does; that what it does depends upon the actual forces in control of its government; and that the nature of these forces depends, in turn, upon what the people choose and do in their dual role as workers and as citizens. Renewed confidence in the possibility of government of, by, and for the people has resulted from this significant experience with the New Deal.

In the fourth place, the New Deal has pioneered in the conservation and the controlled use of the land and other natural resources by means of governmental corporations, or public authorities. Through the agency of the T.V.A. the American people have learned from first-hand experience that public enterprise and private enterprise are not necessarily antagonistic. On the contrary, they have witnessed this Valley Authority operate in ways which have enriched and made more secure and meaningful the life of the population of a whole region. They have also seen this accomplished through an agency whose controls are not external and centralized in a remote Washington, but are rather located and exercised where the project is carried on and indeed are frequently administered by their fellow-citizens and even their own neighbors. This commitment to a national development program through governmental sponsorship is deep—and should our private postwar economy begin to decline into a depression with widespread unemployment, no Congress, whether Republican or Democratic, could long withstand the popular demand that would arise for a program which would do in the other great river basins of the nation, that which has already been achieved in the Tennessee Valley.

Fifth, and finally, under the leadership of Roosevelt, the American people gave up their historic policy of isolationism, or continental

Americanism. They now realize that it is one world or none and that national security can be had only if an alternative to total, technological war can be developed through world organization. The role of America in creating and sustaining the military coalition which brought total defeat to the Fascist Powers is known to all. The creative part that Roosevelt also played in the movement to transform the military coalition of the War into a permanent United Nations organization is also well known. Americans are frankly disappointed in the results thus far achieved, but they are not discouraged, and, in view of the great stakes involved, they are prepared to do their full part to make an operating reality out of the United Nations.

They recognize that recent scientific developments, including atomic fission, have made world organization a condition of human survival. They understand that world organization involves economic and cultural as well as political and military cooperation. They desire to see the full program of the United Nations carried forward.

In at least these five important ways the Roosevelt leadership has helped the American people achieve a new orientation. The Republicans, as the opposition Party, have been hostile to many of these changes. But now that they have the responsibility of sharing in the making of government policy, it is not probable that they will make a frontal attack on these major developments. Some of their leaders are particularly interested in amending the Wagner Act and would like by one means or another to weaken the power of organized labor. But the political consequences of this would be serious, and it is already apparent that the Party as a whole will strive to get the cooperation of the more conservative leaders of labor for its labor program. It is also possible that in spite of their present support of the United Nations the Republicans will fail to lead in the development of the world economic program required to make a genuine success of world organization. Certainly the most optimistic interpretation of the present situation offers little hope that the Republican Party will do much to advance further along the lines of the New Deal.

Confronted with this unsatisfactory situation it is obvious that American liberals are handicapped because they do not now have a progressive instrumentality in one of the major parties. In this transitional period they need such a labor-liberal party for purposes of education, agitation and action. The failure of the New Deal to bring about such a re-alignment in American political life greatly weakens liberals as they seek to continue the two-front struggle—domestic

and international—for democracy. The attempt to develop this much needed national labor-liberal Party is, of course, vastly complicated by the present deep divisions in the organized labor movement of the United States. Labor, moreover, in both the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. still tends to adhere to the traditional Gompers' policy of "rewarding friends and punishing enemies" as opposed to the organization of a new party with a distinctive labor orientation.

3. Two Tendencies in American Liberalism

As the foregoing indicates, American liberals are committed to world organization, and to cooperation with the major powers—including the Soviet Union—as a necessary means of achieving a strong United Nations organization. Two factors, however, have bred a deep concern in American liberals about present tendencies in the world situation.

One of these is the invention of the atomic bomb. They believe that an atomic war might result in a destruction so terrible that democratic civilization would be set back for centuries. American scientific leaders, acting in cooperation with the leaders of government, have concluded that the only way to control the development and use of atomic energy is to put it under a world authority and to equip this authority with an adequate system of international inspection, not subject to the veto of any single nation. The failure of the Soviet Union thus far to cooperate in the evolution of a satisfactory plan for the control of atomic energy is profoundly disturbing.

So, also, is the tendency of the Soviet Union to seek strategic security through a program of expansion in both Europe and Asia. This expansionist thrust of the Soviet Union has already greatly altered the attitude of American liberals.

It is true that Henry Wallace has criticized the American approach to the problem of the control of atomic energy, and he has also recommended that the United States should be tolerant of these expansionist tendencies of the Soviet Union. Labor and liberal leaders of other countries would make a gross miscalculation, however, if they were to assume that Henry Wallace speaks for any important section of American liberals on these crucial matters of foreign policy. The mature, informed elements in American liberalism were profoundly shocked by his speech at the Madison Square Garden last fall, and no matter how much they respect his past services in America's domestic field, they have no desire to be associated with his present ideas on American

foreign policy. On the contrary, they consider that these ideas are not well-grounded in fact, and that they are based on a sentimental misconception of the deeper tendencies in the present world situation. Any liberal abroad who assumes that American liberals are divided on these issues will be profoundly mistaken about the real posture of American attitudes. Americans are deeply convinced that unless the Soviet Union modifies her position in these two matters of imperialist expansion, and of national as opposed to international control of the scientific means of warfare, the plan of cooperation with her in the United Nations will be without substance.

In the second place, American liberals are still gradualists; they are committed to the principles of the mixed economy, and they refuse to accept the program of wholesale socialism for the United States. They believe in planning, they demand that our country maintain production and full employment, and they are willing to go as far toward socialization of the ownership of the means of production as experience shows is necessary in order to attain these objectives. They prefer to make these decisions piecemeal, however, and they are committed to the attainment of their objectives by peaceful, parliamentary means as opposed to the techniques of capture and dictatorship.

Undoubtedly, these attitudes are the product of American conditions and ways of life. Although the last depression and the War cost the common people a great deal, our conditions of life never became anything like so desperate as they became in most of Europe and Asia. Possibly as a result of this more favorable economic situation, Americans have little sympathy with the notion that economic security, sustained production and abundance must be obtained at a price that involves the sacrifice of cultural and political freedom. They refuse to accept the conclusion that we are limited in our present range of choices to the totalitarian alternatives of Fascism and Communism. They hold that democracy—political, cultural and economic—is an alternative to both of these systems of totalitarianism, and that all necessary changes in the American economy can be brought about by means that are in harmony with these historic democratic freedoms. They are unwilling to destroy the articulations of American society—the functional groups and organizations in particular—in order to develop a united-front revolutionary mass political movement.

It is from this standpoint that they have observed the development of the British Labor Party with deep satisfaction and expectation. They rejoice that it now constitutes the Government of Great Britain, and they hope that it will succeed in its effort to socialize the ways of

living while still maintaining the freedoms that make possible a life of dignity and integrity for the individual human being.

American liberals note that in contrast to much that is happening on the Continent of Europe, the British Labor Party refuses to make common cause with the Communists. They believe that the British have chosen wisely in this connection, and they hope to achieve, in time, a similar political development within the United States. Liberalism here requires the cooperation of labor, farmers, and the middle class in a united political movement. This cooperation, as Roosevelt demonstrated, can be achieved if it works within the framework of American democratic principles and ideals. Liberalism as a political movement in America would surely destroy itself if it were organically connected with any group that is known to serve as the agent of the forces in control of the Soviet Union. It would also be doomed as a political force if the rank and file of the American people came to believe that it was committed to the techniques of conspiracy, capture, and dictatorship.

The attempt to develop such an authentic democratic political party in the United States is the unfinished business of the New Deal. It is the most fundamental of all the postwar tasks of American liberalism.

EXISTENTIALISM: A NEW TREND IN PHILOSOPHY

Paul Kecskemeti

I. A New Language in Philosophy

Most philosophical schools in the past, from antiquity to the nineteenth century, no matter how much they differed among themselves, agreed in one thing: they placed the abstract and universal above the concrete and particular. The older philosophies sought to formulate truths valid for all time and for every person. They encouraged the tendency to look at things as mere instances of the working of universal laws. Hence, when a burning practical question arose in the life of an individual, this philosophical tradition required him to trace it back to the pertinent general laws. Philosophy as such was concerned merely with great, all-embracing questions, such as the Meaning of Life, the Fundamental Laws of Nature, the Essence of Truth, and so on. In so far as there was any application of these abstract verities to practical problems, the individual was supposed to work it out for himself; the philosopher merely gave the general framework. He was convinced, of course, that the general framework was all that mattered; the application to individual cases followed all by itself. Thus, philosophy spoke a truly abstract language, every term of which impartially had the same meaning for every individual.

It was no less than a complete revolution in philosophy when an isolated thinker in small Denmark, Soeren Kierkegaard, in the '40s of the nineteenth century began to speak in a new language. Opening any of Kierkegaard's works at random, one may well doubt whether his subject is philosophy at all. There is no mention of the "great questions of life," or rather, we hear about "great questions of life" in an entirely different sense. For instance, Kierkegaard discusses the question whether a person should marry or not; this question is raised,

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not as the abstract problem of marriage which is the same for every person, but as a concrete problem facing one particular young man in connection with one particular young girl. Kierkegaard discovered that these were the really important problems, since they were the ones that made a difference to one's life. He called these problems the "existential" problems, and put them squarely before the philosopher.

"Abstraction," Kierkegaard said, "is without interest; to exist is the highest interest of the existing subject." Or again: "What is abstract thinking? It is a kind of thinking for which there is no person who thinks. It disregards everything except thought, and thought can exist within itself as its own medium. Existence, on the other hand, is not thoughtless, but in existence, thought is in a foreign medium."

The novelty of this language consists in the fact that "existence," "interest," and the like, are used as primitive terms. Older philosophies used as primitives such terms as "idea," "sensation," "emotion," etc. That is to say, the world as a reality was built up out of sense data, ideas, and emotions, or whatever the "x" was that "caused" sense data, ideas, and emotions. What these sense data, ideas, and emotions "meant" for the individual subject was entirely *his* affair. His "existence" and "interests" were whatever followed, in a particular case, from a constellation of the primitive data (the sensations, ideas, emotions); they were secondary and derivative. For Kierkegaard, however, existence as such, interest as such, belong to the primary stuff of reality.

Since the existence of the individual and his vital interests cannot be deduced from more primitive terms, the philosopher must not be preoccupied with impersonal sense data and ideas but must become a "subjective thinker." As such, he is endowed with "imagination, feeling and dialectic in the immediacy of existence with passion." To the extent that the thinker exists in subjectivity, his thoughts have real pertinence.

The supreme interest of Kierkegaard's hero, the subjective thinker, was "becoming a Christian" as a condition for salvation. For him, it was necessary to abandon abstract living and thinking primarily because there was no other way to become a Christian. According to Kierkegaard, it is the isolated individual who has to work out his salvation by becoming a Christian; this is achieved in a supreme "moment" when one embraces "faith" in an experience incommensurable with the regular happenings of everyday life. The essence of the "moment" of achieving faith is a passionate risking of everything for the sake of something that is not accessible to reason. The content of faith

is absurd and paradoxical; but then, nothing except the absurd and paradoxical can be existentially relevant; whatever is logical and reasonable is necessarily abstract and neutral with regard to existential questions.

Kierkegaard's writings remained virtually unknown for about fifty years after his death. Since the beginning of the century, however, his fame and influence have been spreading. It was by no means only theologians who were interested in him as the exponent of a paradoxical idea of Christianity; his "existential" approach, his stand against abstract thinking, deeply influenced philosophers who did not share his religious preoccupation. Among existentialist thinkers today, there are nihilists and atheists as well as Christian believers.

The basic idea of existentialism is that the individual human being always is in a situation; that his situation means something to him; and that this meaning cannot be derived from elements devoid of such existential meaning.

What, then, is the task the existential philosopher sets himself? Obviously, he cannot hope to solve all existential problems of every individual human being. Yet, he wants to give some guidance to individuals enmeshed in their respective situations. In order to do this, of course, he has to take up a position outside the various concrete situations. In this sense, he must remain abstract; no philosophy can be anything else. In another sense, existentialist philosophy contrasts with abstract philosophy in that the former deals with the concrete material which makes up situations, whereas the latter's material is situationally neutral. The existentialist teaches his pupil to derive meanings from primitive terms which are themselves meaningful, whereas the abstract philosopher gives directions for constructing meanings with situationally meaningless raw materials.

This cleavage is, it seems to me, an extremely radical and important one. Existentialism is (to use William James' phrase) tender-minded and pessimistic; abstract thinking is—in the form in which it is influential today—tough-minded and optimistic. I mean that the existentialist does not dare to break up the stuff of human experience too radically; he fears that if one lets go of meanings, they can not be recaptured again. The abstract thinker, that is to say, the pragmatist and scientist, on the other hand, feels confident that meaning will emerge all by itself if the analysis of experience is pushed far enough in the direction of unanalyzable and uninterpretable ultimates. It is important to bear this in mind, for it is easy to be misled by the often seemingly "tough," disillusioned and misanthropic language of many

existentialists. Basically, as Jean-Paul Sartre, the leader of French existentialism, put it, existentialism is humanism. As such, it is opposed to anti-humanistic scientism and pragmatism.

Which type of thinking is appropriate to our age? This question cannot be answered impartially, because one of the main issues disputed by the two schools is precisely whether the one or the other is more appropriate to our time. The time has not yet, so to speak, made up its mind; the only thing we can be sure about is that it is about as easy to interpret our time in "existentialist" terms as in "abstract" ones. In the present situation, it is just as "natural" to hold that the understanding of the condition of man and communication between human beings alone can avert doom, as to hold that the resolute application of scientific method alone can save humanity. At the end of this paper, I shall indicate my own stand with regard to this alternative.

II. Existence and its Limits

Present-day existentialism can be traced back to two German philosophers who were deeply influenced by Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers.

Heidegger starts from what he calls the problem of "ontology," namely, the question what we mean when we say that something "is" or exists "in reality." Do we mean—or, rather, should we mean—that this really existing thing is something that can be sensed? or that it can be measured by scientific instruments? or that it can be thought of? or that its existence can be logically proved? Or, if none of these "definitions of being" is correct, which one is?

In Heidegger's opinion, all the definitions given above are inadequate. He feels that whatever presupposes another being that senses or measures or thinks it cannot be the example of "being" in that emphatic sense he has in mind. He finds only one type of "being" which is not derived from the being of something else but is self-contained, namely, the existence of the individual human being. The human individual, Heidegger says, not only *is,* but in so far as he is, his existence *matters* to him. This "being-that-matters-to-the-thing-that-is" he calls "existence," and he holds that all modes of being have to be defined in terms of their relation to "existence." All this is rather close to the Kierkegaardian conception of existence.

But older philosophies also come to mind at this point. We may think of the Greek Protagoras who said that "man is the measure of all things—of the existence of the real ones as well as of the non-

existence of the unreal ones." We may also recall Descartes who found that there was just one proposition which withstood his persistent, systematic doubting, the proposition "I think, hence I am." In these older philosophies, however, the standards by which "being" is judged are situationally neutral; in Protagoras' case, if we accept Plato's interpretation in the "Theaetetus," they are sensations; in Descartes' case, they are thoughts. Heidegger's standard, on the other hand, is a sense of urgency, of anxiety, which belongs to a situational context. Heidegger's "existence" is not only recorded like a datum but "means" something to the being that exists and is anxious to exist.

This "existence," Heidegger holds, always projects a meaningful, functional world around itself. "Being-in-a-world" is one of its essential characteristics; this is how Heidegger disposes of the old philosophical teaser of the "existence of the outside world." Within the world which is thus an attribute of the existence of the individual, reality is encountered, first of all, in the shape of the functional roles or "handinesses" of things. A chair as "something-to-sit-upon" is more real than a "physical object" or a "sense datum."

Existence essentially "cares" about things; it can be interpreted as "care" and "anxiety." The latter is an especially fundamental aspect of the reality of existence: it is a "metaphysical" emotion in which existence senses the "possibility of non-being." In "anxiety," existence comes nearest to a complete and adequate understanding of itself, because anxiety contains in itself the most fundamental and radical piece of knowledge that is given to man, namely, the knowledge that his existence is finite. It is bounded by death which alone makes it whole. Even during life, existence is "conditioned by death,"—not in the sense that man knows it as a fact of experience that he will die, and not in the sense that he explicitly thinks of his own death all the time, but in the sense that "anxiety" as a motor of existence gives urgency to all things that matter. There is "reality" because man dies, that is, because he has not infinite time on his hands. If one could wait indefinitely, nothing would "matter"; hence, nothing would be real.

Existence, however, is not only "conditioned by death"; it also *forgets* death and builds up a fictitious world of sham permanence and trivial understanding around itself. This is the "everyday," "public" world, the world of the anonymous mass (Heidegger calls the latter *"das Man,"* using as a substantive the German pronoun corresponding to "one" in phrases like "one wears . . . ," "one feels . . . ," etc.). It is a world in which man constantly hides beneath the mask of anonymity, silencing his anxiety by commonplace sententiousness and meaningless

news-mongering. Heidegger's message seems to be that man should strive to lead a "genuine" life as much as possible, extricating himself from the mass which alienates him from himself. Thus freed, man can have essential experiences upon which his death casts a shadow of urgency.

The other outstanding exponent of German existentialism, Karl Jaspers, does not isolate the individual the way Heidegger does. One of the basic categories of *his* existentialism is "communication." "Nobody can be saved alone," he says; "there is no truth through which I could reach my goal in isolation." For Jaspers, too, "genuineness" and "being oneself" are ultimate goals; but these goals should be sought through communication, through self-expression, through the "loving struggle" with a partner, and, virtually at least, through the development of a community embracing all individual existences.

Jaspers is far less nihilistic than Heidegger. For Heidegger, existence is "thrown into" the inexorable, irresistible stream of Time; for Jaspers, ultimate reality transcends Time. "In every act performed out of primordial freedom," he says, "in every form of absolute consciousness, in every act of love, temporality, although emphasized rather than forgotten, is in fact transcended into eternity. Existential time as the appearance of absolute Being becomes, on the one hand, inexorable 'time as such,' and, on the other, the transcending of this time into eternity." This passage shows that Jaspers' version of existentialism represents a far less complete rupture with the tradition of German philosophical idealism than Heidegger's one.

With all this, Jaspers, who is more "tender-minded" than Heidegger, is also more pessimistic. Heidegger, like Bertrand Russell, builds his philosophy on "a firm foundation of despair": since he expects nothing except annihilation, he cannot be disappointed. On the contrary, he is able to extract a sense of haughty, bitter, icy triumph from his contemplation of the finiteness of existence: just in so far as he does not "forget" death, man, a finite being, can achieve dignity and genuineness. In this way, he can succeed. For Jaspers, however, reality holds only failure in store for man. "The ultimate is failure." A genuine pessimist, Jaspers admits disappointment; he disdains Heidegger's stoical device of denying that he wants to have what cannot be had. Failure, he says, consists in not attaining or losing what one craves most, and all human striving is bounded by such failure. As a prophet of doom, Jaspers is far more specific than Heidegger. He wrote in 1932: "Should there be a possibility to destroy the foundations of human existence by technological means, there could hardly be any

doubt that one day it would be done . . . Historical experience with man shows that the most dreadful things that are possible are perpetrated somewhere, at some time by someone."

For both Jaspers and Heidegger, man's situation achieves meaningfulness in the measure as it is confronted with its extreme possibilities, its limits. For Heidegger, the extreme possibility is death; for Jaspers, it is one of the "limit situations" (death, suffering, conflict). Both in their philosophy go to the limit and think under the highest pressure.

III. A Quest for the Absolute

How can we understand the emergence of existentialist philosophies in Germany at a certain historical moment, between the two world wars?

It is obvious that there was something in the social, moral and intellectual situation of Germany between the two wars that prepared the soil for existentialist doctrines. To speak of the social factors first, we know that the war and the subsequent inflation permanently destroyed the economic basis of millions of middle-class families. To those affected, mere "existence" seemed, in fact, the quintessence of all problems; at the same time, they felt that traditional, abstract doctrines were of no help in solving the problem of "existing."

Other experiences of the same generation also brought it to grips with "limit situations." Death, of course, had been a daily experience at the front, and many young Germans responded to this experience by developing a Heideggerian attitude long before Heidegger's book was published: they felt that the imminence of death heightened their sense of "existing." We know that after the war ended, flocks of young Germans found it simply impossible to go back to civilian life; they went wherever the spark of war still flickered in unruly Europe, to the Baltic, to Silesia, to the strife-torn industrial cities of Germany, in an attempt to perpetuate their "front experience" of communing, in "sacred comradeship," in the mystery of Death. Half illuminates, half mercenaries, these young Germans became a potent factor in the conservation and strengthening of the militarist spirit in Germany. And this spirit gained new recruits from year to year in growing boys who never experienced war but to whom their elders somehow transmitted the feeling that soldiering, bringing one in contact with death, heightened one's sense of existing. Militarism thus exercized a powerful lure away from the "triviality of everyday life."

There were other kinds of Germans too—those who hated war

and wanted to build up a radically new world with new goals and values. But the nation was tired and workaday triviality soon reasserted itself. In the end, the Nazis profited, not only by the smoldering fires of militarism, but also by the frustrated gropings of abortive idealism. Their barked commands soon silenced all questioning.

Before they seized power, however, there had been much questioning and soul-searching. Was there a philosophy that could make sense of the radically new experiences of this generation? The official, academic philosophy of the pre-war years clearly was powerless to do this. A new philosophical approach was needed for intellectual orientation in a new, unstable world.

The predominant philosophy in Germany during the period immediately preceding the First World War had been neo-Kantianism. The outstanding characteristic of this school was a certain subdued restraint which may itself be understood as a reaction to the intellectual debauch of Hegelian philosophy. While the Hegelians had conceived philosophy as a "super-science" which is called upon to discover all essential facts about reality with the help of "dialectics," the neo-Kantians left the discovery and the explanation of the facts of the world to the various sciences. What philosophy could do, according to them, was merely to examine the methods and procedures of science and to marshal reasons for considering scientific findings as valid.

The same neo-Kantian approach was also applied to other cultural pursuits beside science. The neo-Kantian philosophy of law, for instance, examined the peculiar "validity" of legal findings, presupposing the existence and validity of the legal system within which they were delivered. Whether he was dealing with religion, or art, or any other field of human endeavor, the neo-Kantian philosopher contented himself with the rather secondary role of examining the peculiar kind of "validity" of an organized body of experience. He furnished a running commentary for the doings of the specialists who were in charge of the various cultural domains.

The mood underlying this kind of philosophy was that fundamentally, all was right with the world, since there were experts for everything who could not be wrong; or if they were, it would just be too bad, because no one could question their findings anyway. The neo-Kantian philosophy admirably expressed the average German's awe in the presence of every kind of expert and official. After the war, however, it was simply impossible to leave things at that. Authorities in every field had received too severe a jolt; a new philosophy was needed to replace the old beacon-lights which were swaying too dan-

gerously with the heaving and crumbling of the ground to which they were fastened.

This situation gave Edmund Husserl's "phenomenological" school a chance to be listened to. Rebelling against neo-Kantianism, Husserl at the beginning of the century gave out the motto for philosophy to "get at the things themselves," to seek original rather than secondary knowledge. This original knowledge concerned "essential" laws—laws objective, eternal and immutable which were logically prior to, and independent of, empirical data. The claim that such laws existed and could be discovered was by no means extravagant, since the propositions of logic and mathematics are, in fact, "essential laws" in Husserl's sense. The question is, however, how far the domain of "essential laws" reaches. Is it confined to logic and mathematics? In that case, something, to be sure, would be safe from the danger of being sucked into the maelstrom of the general collapse, but far too little to give comfort to man in the sorry state of his affairs,—inasmuch as Ludwig Wittgenstein gave some very good reasons for assuming that logic and mathematics consisted of nothing but "tautologies," i.e., that they gave no real information about the world. What was needed, however, was information about the world, and about man, and, if possible, information of an "essential" nature, for the sake of certainty. Was phenomenology able to furnish it?

It had been understood from the beginning that no "essential laws" could be discovered concerning the physical world, and, in general, concerning the objects studied by the sciences. That is to say, phenomenology did not claim to be able to tell, prior to, and independently of, any experience, whether anything was either "necessary" or "impossible" in the realm of nature, apart from mathematical and logical necessities and impossibilities, which, however, are trivial. Phenomenology did, however, claim to discover "essential" laws concerning human attitudes. It proclaimed that, if man adopted any given attitude, certain things followed for him with ineluctable necessity: he committed himself to following through the inner logic of his attitude. It was, for instance, strictly "impossible" to see a color without seeing an extension. And the law expressing this impossibility was an "essential" law; in order to grasp it, it was not necessary to conduct psychological experiments and to explore the actual behavior of human beings. It was sufficient to form a mental image of "color" and "extension."

Husserl developed a method for the discovery and isolation of similar "essential" laws concerning human attitudes and states of con-

sciousness. He called this method the phenomenological *"epoché,"* a Greek word which means "abstention from judgment." The essence of the method was that the subject had to observe his own consciousness in an effort to find something that would remain as it is, no matter what would be true concerning the outside world. It is obvious that if there are essential laws concerning human states of consciousness, some such device is needed to discover them, since they have to be logically independent of judgments about the outside world.

During the post-war years, when phenomenology enjoyed a considerable vogue in Germany, its representatives were active in exploring all human attitudes for their "essential" elements. The general trend of this work was directed against all shades of subjectivism and relativism. The phenomenologists sought, for instance, to save values from their bondage to empirical psychology. Their point was that questions of value are questions of right, and that questions of right cannot logically depend on knowledge about how people actually behave. Does it not follow from this that the solution of questions of value must be based upon "essential" insights?

Such a bold assertion of absolute values was, of course, just the thing which a generation bewildered by the collapse of its values needed. And it cannot be denied that the phenomenological distinction between questions of fact and questions of right made sense. But how could simple human beings discover beyond doubt what was right,—that is, not what "right" was in general, but what the right thing to do was in their situation, here and now? Husserl's method could not help, because it was too abstract and detached. Clearly, *"epoché"* was something for philosophers only; it was unable to clear up practical situations. Other phenomenologists stressed the intuitive approach to values, but this avenue seemed to lead back to subjectivism, unless one was resolved to proclaim his own value intuitions as *the* objective truth about values. If one wanted to live by the principles of phenomenology, one needed, as a supplement to it, a dependable method of applying those principles to practical situations.

This was Heidegger's problem. His existentialism represents an attempt to make phenomenology vital. He wanted to lay bare, not the structure of this or that attitude, or of "pure consciousness" in general, but of vital interaction with the world. What Heidegger asserts about "existence," "anxiety," "care," etc., is meant as a set of "essential" laws—but essential laws of live situations, not of pale, abstract consciousness.

Was this the "supplement" to phenomenology that was needed to

render it applicable to concrete questions of right? I do not think so. For the required addition was not, as a matter of fact, an analysis of human existence as such, but guidance as to how to make a reasonably objective estimate, in one's own situation, of what is right. And Heidegger's method made no contribution to this task. On the contrary, his radical individualism tended to obscure the objectivity of values which phenomenology sought to establish. The one absolute principle of behavior which Heidegger did proclaim was that of "genuineness," but his indications as to how to achieve it remained vague.

Jaspers reached existentialism by a different route, coming from a different tradition. His thinking is rooted in North German, Protestant and subjectivistic antecedents, contrasting with the brittle, South German and vaguely Catholic objectivism of the phenomenologist school. Jaspers' outlook is broader, more tolerant, more sympathetic than that of Heidegger; he wants to integrate in his system as many spiritual trends as possible, while Heidegger's aim is the "destruction" of the history of philosophy. But the final practical conclusion one may derive from Jaspers' philosophy also amounts to little more than the "realization of one's own potentialities." German existentialism failed to work out an objective theory of values. It forged no intellectual weapons to combat the moral anarchy which was an important factor in the rise of Nazism.

Or should we go even further than this, and say that German existentialism was essentially related to Nazism and positively contributed to it?

Heidegger's own behavior—he joined the Nazis and acted abominably towards Husserl—is apt to strengthen such a suspicion; Jaspers, on the other hand, firmly rejected Nazism. Moreover, our own description of the German post-war situation suggested a strong analogy between existentialism on the one hand, and certain Nazi and pre-Nazi attitudes on the other. It seems to me, however, that one can speak only of certain points of contact between Nazism and German existentialism, and not of an essential inner relatedness.

Let us consider some of these points of contact. Heidegger's theory of man's being "thrown into" the world is itself no Nazi tenet, but it is a nihilistic one and may be used in rationalizing one's yielding to Nazism. For if man is thrown into a fatal whirl of time and space, how can he reject wrongs which are firmly entrenched at the place and time where he had been "thrown"? Another point of contact is the dramatization of existence which is essential to both Heidegger's and Jaspers' theory. The thesis that life derives its meaning from death or

from "limit situations" sounds like a glorification of militarism. We may also recall certain other aspects of Heidegger's theory: his depreciation of everyday routine, his contempt for the anonymous mass. All this combined easily with the romantic side of Nazism, its exaltation of dangerous and heroic living, its cult of a super-humanly bold and unscrupulous *élite*.

And yet, all these parallels are rather superficial. To be sure, a youth drunken with yearning for military glory may use the theory of "limit situations" as a rationalization of his attude, but is this the real import of the theory? Should we not rather say that, precisely because "limit situations" are basic to existence, we need no extraordinary adventures to be confronted with them? And as for the *élite* of those who live genuinely, it certainly cannot be adequately represented by a political machine, built upon blackmail, demagoguery and terror. We must not forget that Heidegger is, first and foremost, an individualist. He sharply distinguished "existence," and that means *individual* existence, as a unique mode of being, from all other modes of being, and especially that of mere things. Herein lies the germ of the recognition of man's essential dignity. This dignity is, I repeat, inherent in the individual as such. Heidegger says that existence is never "a case or instance of a species of existing things." In terms of existence, all humans have equal dignity. Heidegger, unfortunately, never explicily drew these conclusions from his own theory, but they are inevitable. When Heidegger joined the Nazis, he betrayed his own philosophy.

Jaspers' case, while morally more simple, is more complicated on the level of theory. The danger of Jaspers' existentialism lies in its too great inclusiveness. Everything has its niche in his system, including the romantic concepts of "people" and "race." He speaks of these under the heading of "passion towards Night" to which he neatly assigns its place in the scheme of things. But that place is a subordinate one. Control belongs to the "light" side of existence, to Reason. It is, to be sure, a Reason too much concerned with reconciling opposites and accomplishing virtuoso feats of intuition, but Reason nevertheless.

The criticism we have to make against German existentialism, then, is not that it represents a philosophical expression of Nazi attitudes, but that it does not push existential analysis far enough to make it applicable to the individual's situation here and now. What German existentialism gives us is still on the whole an abstract, formal analysis of existence as such, in spite of the existentialist language used which deprecates mere abstraction.

IV. Existence and Action

Of all European nations after the First World War, the French were the most knowing and most bitter. To that generation it seemed impossible to believe in the existence of higher motives and ideal strivings in man. The assumption of unmitigated egoism and lack of sense of responsibility seemed axiomatic. Every one, it seemed, had to look out for himself. If mythical collective persons — such as the Country or Class or Humanity — claimed one's allegiance, one could be sure of being imposed upon. Sometimes it was impossible to remain aloof, since the myths were too powerful to permit the individual to resist their pressure. But the individual was able to *know,* at least, that he was being imposed upon. He also could deliberately choose to take advantage of the vogue of one or the other myth. Why not, since there existed no valid moral law compelling one to condemn such behavior? Everything was in doubt, except that the individual "existed" and was anxious to exist. But this generation in France discovered that it was difficult for the individual to "exist" if no justification for his actions was possible. The problem was how to "exist" without the possibility of justifying one's existence in terms of higher laws or ideals.

Yes, there were concrete institutions to which the individual could anchor his existence — the State and the Church. Both were going concerns, not needful of any justification; what was needed was a constructive attitude whereby one could add to their substance. As Henri Massis said, the problem for man was to build, not to justify.

The epochal importance of the defeat of 1940 consists in the fact that it put an end to the unproblematic, automatic existence of these institutions. The French republican state ceased to exist, and a new, authoritarian state was put in its place with the help of the German invader. And the Church had to define anew its position towards the State. It was willing to cooperate with the new authoritarian regime which sharply rejected the anti-clerical traditions of the Third Republic; but it had to "justify" this decision, as the new state also was constantly obliged to "justify" itself against the charge of treason.

The net result of these changes was a bewilderment even greater than the one which had existed prior to 1940. Two great traditions which up to then at least had the support of two unquestionably existing institutions became utterly discredited. One was the tradition of the French Revolution, of republican "liberty, equality, and

fraternity"; the Third Republic, the institution which embodied this tradition, succumbed in one short campaign, and who would want to build a country's future upon a foundation which proved so weak in a decisive trial? The other tradition which became discredited in 1940 was Catholic monarchism. It became discredited because it allied itself with collaborationism. Its visible exponent was Vichy.

No single body of belief remained intact after the hurricane of 1940. The mental and spiritual horizon of the young generation of France was marked by a nihilism more complete than ever. And yet, there was something new and positive in the situation. There was a task to be done, urgent, compelling, beyond the need for justification — resistance to the enemy had to be organized, the invader had to be thrown out of France. Practical certitude was complete, just as complete as theoretical uncertainty was.

This is how Albert Camus described this situation: "We had to confront (the crisis) with whatever values we could muster, that is to say with none, except for the consciousness of the absurdity in which we lived. Thus we had to go to war and face terror without consolation and certitude. We knew only that we could not yield to the brutes taking charge in the four corners of Europe. But in the position in which we found ourselves, we did not know how to justify this obligation. What is more, the most conscious among us realized that they were aware of no principle in whose name they could oppose terror and reject murder as a means." Camus concluded that his generation needed a philosophy which "can reconcile negative thought and the possibility of affirmative action."

It was Jean-Paul Sartre who, during the German occupation, formulated an existentialist doctrine which aimed to "reconcile negative thought with the possibility of affirmative action." Much in his principal work, *L'Etre et le Néant* (*Being and Nothingness*) is closely reminiscent of Heidegger. But Sartre's thinking is made of different stuff.

For him, the fundamental category from which everything else flows is not human existence, but Being as such, Being pure and simple, that which "is not even itself but simply is." And because he starts from such a "dense" concept of Being, the difficulty for him consists in accounting for such phenomena as human knowledge, consciousness and "existence." If there is nothing but that which Is, there can be no knowledge and no consciousness, since knowledge and consciousness presuppose at least *two* different things — the known and the knower; conscience and that of which it is conscience. But there

can be nothing but that which Is, since everything that is other than that which Is is not. It follows from this dilemma that knowledge, consciousness and existence can have their origin only in which is not, that is to say, in nothing.

Being, then, must be thought of as producing Nothingness. But this is absured; nothingness cannot be produced; consequently, Sartre invents a new verb (following Heidegger's famous coinage, *"das Nichts nichtet,"* "the Nihil nihilates"): "to nihilize" (*néantiser*). Being "nihilizes" itself. "The Being through which nothingness comes into the world must be its own nothingness." After this happens, the dull self-identity of "Being-in-itself" (which, as we have seen, is not even an identity but is beyond it) is at last transcended, and things, as we might say, begin to hum.

First, we learn that "nihilized" Being is freedom. It is also referred to as "consciousness" and "Being-for-itself." It is founded upon an "absolute act" of "nihilization." "The human being at first reposes in the midst of Being, and then tears itself away from it by a nihilizing withdrawal." The particular mode of being of man, his existence, is not founded in itself and substantial. It consists only in a "questioning" of the world.

For Heidegger, existence is finite but substantial; it is the source of all substantiality, and its proper goal is to achieve "being itself." For Sartre, however, human existence is merely "its own nothingness'; "there is no common measure between human existence and the *causa sui* which it would like to be," and hence "we can say that man perishes so that the *causa sui* may exist." Man cannot be himself, and he cannot know himself. The "ego" is transcendent, i.e., I can just as little know myself from within as I can any other being. Man always lives in "bad faith." He can only fail; "the history of every man's life is the history of a failure."

So much for "negative thinking." Where, then, does "affirmative action" come in? Well, man can "engage himself" in the world; he can create "values." "In this world in which I engage myself, my actions scare up values like partridges; it is through my indignation that the anti-value 'baseness' is given to me, and the value 'greatness' is given to me through my admiration." Sartre vehemently denies any pre-existence or timeless validity of values. They are created by being affirmed.

"The existence of a value is derived from its being asserted, and not the other way 'round. It does not, therefore, reveal itself to intuitive contemplation which would then perceive it *as* a value . . . My

freedom alone is the foundation of values and . . . nothing, nothing at all, justifies my adopting such and such values or standards of values." "In so far as I am a being for whom values exist, I am unjustifiable. And my freedom is anxiety to be the foundation without foundation of values."

Man is responsible for anything that happens to him; he "is responsible for himself and for the world." He "chooses" every situation in which he finds himself. This cannot be otherwise, for the very essence of man's existence is "freedom," that is, "the original projection of its own nothingness." Man cannot blame God or the world for anything that happens — neither for wars nor for social calamities which ruin his existence — because he has "chosen" everything himself. If he is dissatisfied with anything that happens, why, he can always commit suicide. And that's that.

As a metaphysical speculation, Sartre's book is interesting in spots. As a philosophy of existence, it is fundamentally worthless. It reduces all existential problems to a very abstract metaphysical level where nothing can happen and nothing matters. If man is essentially "free" and cannot be deprived of his freedom, existential problems concerning the defense of one's own freedom, or respect for another's freedom, do not arise. I am the last to deny that man is "essentially" free, and I can see good sense in saying that he "chooses" his world in a way. But the existential question is how these general and abstract truths reflect themselves in concrete situations.

Nothing that Sartre says makes any difference to any situation, except in so far as he exalts the negative aspect of things and denies the objective validity of values. As a program of action, this is singularly unfruitful. One cannot put Sartre's doctrine into effect, because no action can contradict it. After all, I alone can create my values and it is silly to ask for any justification for what one is doing; so how could I be wrong?

Sometimes, reading Sartre's book, one has the distinct feeling that it is an elaborate hoax. Towards the end of the book, he himself gives himself away by saying that "the principal result of existential psychoanalysis must be to make us renounce serious-mindedness." I wonder whether the terrific vogue enjoyed by Sartre's existentialism is not due to the fact that it appeals to the subtle Gallic sense of humor. People, it seems, enter into the spirit of the game. But one can do that only if one does not take existence seriously.[1]

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[1] Although space does not permit discussion of existentialist trends in French philosophy represented by other thinkers than Sartre, it should at least be mentioned that the existentialist approach is being used in a genuine and fruitful way by Christian thinkers such as Gabriel Marcel.

V. Pragmatism and Existentialism

As we see, both the German and the French variety of existentialism somehow fall short of their promise. Both claim to make man's situation transparent, to make it understandable. Both maintain that this can be done only by throwing away all "abstract" props and plunging into the situation as it affects man here and now. And yet, in both cases, the concrete situation seems to be left out in the cold. The German existentialists analyze the form of human existence or the abstract concept of "mattering-to-one"; Sartre's existentialism limits itself to the assertion of a completely negative, formless and spineless freedom.

Must we not conclude from this failure that the whole existentialist approach is intrinsically faulty, and that we must try another one if we want to get away from "abstraction" and to deal with the concrete situation of man?

Pragmatism might be suggested as such an alternative approach. I classified pragmatism above as one of the "abstract" philosophies, because in its analysis of the world it goes back to situationally neutral ultimate elements. But if we leave this aside for a moment, there is in pragmatism, e.g. in the formulation given it by Dewey, a trend away from abstraction and towards concreteness. Dewey raises a vigorous protest against making concrete life subservient to hardened abstractions, rigid, absolute principles. He stresses the "experimental," nondogmatic attitude which starts from the specific constellation prevailing at each moment. Thus, it seems that we have attained a position from which we can render justice to the specific, concrete content of each situation.

It is especially experimental science to which man can turn for the solution of his existential problems. Science can at least give him the guarantee of maximum success possible, since it does not do what man does when he does not adopt the scientific attitude — that is, obstruct the right course of action by clinging to antiquated, irrelevant beliefs and prejudices. Experimental science is the agency from which we can expect the solution of our existential problems.

I do not want to minimize the existential importance of the scientific approach. Experimental science involves, for one thing, a wonderfully balanced give-and-take between abstract formalisms on the one hand, and concrete situations on the other. But it seems to me that, in so far as human existence in its depth and its totality is concerned, the scientific approach has its limits.

To mention only one aspect of this problem: a really experimental

attitude can be adopted only where we can *afford* to experiment, i.e., where we deal with material that is, broadly speaking, *expendable.* It is impossible to adopt a truly experimental attitude where the existence and the rights of human beings are involved. Should we try to proceed in experimental fashion in ethical matters in earnest, the "existing" subject of our experiment would perish before we could experimentally find out what would be the most satisfactory path for him to follow.

I do not mean to reject a certain amount of experimentation in ethical matters; I merely want to point out that such experimentation is ethically acceptable only where it is not really "serious" experimentation, i.e., where it stops short of certain relevant possibilities. The ethical experimenter himself must be aware of certain limits; he must have tenderness for the subjects he is experimenting on; that is, he must act as a real scientific experimenter would not. That is, even when indulging in an experimental approach to ethical problems, we have to observe principles other than those of the experimental method.

These are the principles that existentialist philosophy would have to explore. In a way, these principles must be absolute and unchanging; we cannot declare them void merely to clear the road for some scientific experiment. But they cannot, on the other hand, be rigidly dogmatic,— not, at least, from the existentialist point of view. For it is essential to the existentialist approach to assume that abstract principles as such cannot be placed higher than the existence of the concrete individuals and groups for which they are claimed to be valid. Existence may indeed be given up under certain circumstances, but only for the sake of other existence, not for the sake of abstractions.

What we expect from the existentialist method is the working out of principles which are firm enough to circumscribe a universe of discourse with well-defined attributes of right and wrong, and flexible enough to allow the full unfolding of existence. Principles of this kind cannot be reduced to situationally neutral ultimate elements. This is why they can be worked out only by the existentialist method. Ultimate principles of action can be based only upon intelligible categories. Man can experiment with, and explore, what he does not understand. But he can freely refrain from certain actions only when he understands the reasons why.

What we need, then, is a new kind of existentialism — one that shows us how we can go about securing intelligible ends, i.e., values. And although neither German nor French existentialism does this, these schools are important because they exemplify an approach that could help in solving this all-important task.

PROBLEMS OF AN AUTONOMOUS ECONOMY

Alfred Braunthal

The New Era

The changes which have taken place in the American economy as a result of the collapse of the system of governmental controls and the outcome of the November elections are not yet understood by the general public. It has not been generally realized that the American economy has entered an entirely new era.

Warren G. Harding was elected President under the slogan "back to normalcy." He made good his promise. Under his presidency and that of his successor this country lived under the sign of normalcy as it had been understood prior to the First World War. It was the "normalcy" of the great trusts, of monopoly capitalism with its prosperity for the rich and misery for the poor. There is a vague notion that the outcome of the 1946 elections will mean a similar return to normalcy. What is not generally understood is the fact that, as the economic and social system of this country has developed in the last ten years, there is no normalcy to which it can return, but only one to which it can proceed.

The economic situation as it existed in 1939, prior to the period of national emergency and to the Second World War, can scarcely be considered normal. The New Deal in 1939 had not yet recovered from the political defeat it had suffered at the hands of a hostile Congressional majority and the economic set-back experienced as a result of the "recession" of 1937-38. The country was still in transition, either to a more planned or more unbridled economy. A return now to the economy of 1939 would not mean return to normalcy, but to an unbalanced and unstable economy with a low degree of efficiency and use of productive capacities.

The economic situation as it existed in the 'twenties was certainly "normal" for the type of capitalist system which then prevailed. But

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a return to that kind of normalcy appears to be impossible because that period was characterized by a system of industrial monopolies without labor unions in the field of monopolistic industries. Our present economic system, characterized by industrial monopolies *and* labor unions, differs fundamentally from a monopolistic system without unions.

If, then, the American economy cannot return to a past normalcy, can perhaps its present state be considered normal; that is to say, well-balanced? To answer this question, a look at the basic structure of the new economic system, as it has emerged from the Second World War after the removal of the war-born governmental controls, is necessary. Three features are of fundamental importance in this picture: the progress in industrialization, in monopolization, and in unionization.

The Accelerated Pace of Industrialization

The industrialization of the United States is, of course, no new development. It has gone on, with ups and downs, for many decades. But with the great depression of the early 'thirties the process of industrialization stopped or became halting. It became the fashion to contend that the economy had definitely lost its incentives to expand and had entered into a phase of permanent stagnation. The war economy and the astounding technical innovations in its wake, as well as the sheer inexhaustible hunger for industrial goods after the deprivations and destructions brought about by the war, have banished the spectre of stagnation for the time being at least. Never before in this country has there been such an explosive expansion of industrial production as that which has occurred since the beginning of the war. In the short span of four years, 1939-43, the Federal Reserve index of industrial production increased 119 per cent. Although this dizzying level of industrial activity could not be maintained in the last stage of the war and in the reconversion period, industrial production in October 1946 was still 70 per cent above the 1939 level. At approximately the same time (November, 1946) the employed civilian labor force was 57,040,000 compared with 46,700,000 employed civilians in the second calendar quarter of 1940, when the first count of the employed civilian labor force was made.[1] The present size of the employed labor force is virtually as large as the full-employment econo-

[1]Compiled from figures published by the Bureau of the Census.

mists had set as their goal for the utilization of manpower in the postwar period.

However, and this is very significant of the intense industrialization process which has been going on in the past few years, the gigantic growth of the labor force has been absorbed completely by industry, trade and government. The agricultural sector of the economy has not only failed to grow, but continued its long-range shrinking process. The number of persons employed in agriculture has actually declined from 10,470,000 in the second quarter of 1940 to 9,290,000 in the same period of 1946.[1] The proportion of the labor force working in agriculture to the total employed civilian labor force declined from 21.9 per cent in the third quarter of 1940 to 16.2 per cent in the same period of 1946.

Of Monopolization

When both capital and labor are well organized, progress in industrialization means a strengthening of the power of both classes relative to other sections of the population. That is precisely what has happened during and after the war, with capital organized in industrial monopolies and labor in unions. The process of monopolization, which had assumed an astounding pace until the great depression of the early 'thirties, was somewhat retarded, if not brought to a standstill in the decade preceding the Second World War. The shock which the monopolized industries suffered in the depression was so severe that their steady gain at the expense of the competitive sector of the economy was interrupted. While, for instance, in the period from 1914 to 1929 the percentage of wage earners in manufacturing establishments employing more than a hundred persons increased from 65.1 to 70.9 per cent of all wage earners in manufacturing industries, the percentage declined to 70 per cent in 1939.[2]

Again, while the ratio of the net income of the largest 5 per cent of all corporations to total corporate net income increased from 79.6 per cent in 1918 to 84.3 per cent in 1929, the percentage in 1939 was 84.5, virtually the same as in 1929.[3]

The war altered this situation radically. While the ranks of small businessmen were gravely depleted by the military draft and the influx of the middle-classes into high-wage war industries, war production was concentrated in the hands of a comparatively few large concerns.

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[1]Compiled from figures published by the Bureau of the Census.
[2]Compiled from the Census of Manufactures.
[3]Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business, March, 1944.

The superiority of large-scale industry as a source of supply for the implements of modern warfare was so striking that all attempts by Congress and by the Administration to divert war orders to small contractors could not substantially alter the trend towards concentration of production.

It seems that the reconversion process has not diminished the superiority of large-scale production in most industries. Although the ranks of small businessmen have been replenished somewhat by the return of veterans and by the diminished lure of work as employees in the former war industries, all indications are that the high degree of concentration of industrial production in large-scale enterprises reached during the war continues. Most large-scale war producers were surprisingly successful in reconverting to civilian industries without marked shrinking in business size.

Large-scale enterprise is by its very nature monopolistic. There is general agreement among economists that competitive prices prevail only in those industries in which no producer controls a sizeable portion of the market. The larger the sector of an industry which is controlled by large-scale firms, the less do prices follow the pressure of competitive markets, the more subject they are to monopolistic influences. Anti-trust laws cannot alter these economic facts. The hyenas of the battlefield need not bind each other by written agreements to reach an understanding about their prey. What applies to prices, holds equally true of the policies of production and of labor relations which monopolistic industries pursue. No deep knowledge of the American economy is required to realize that virtually all major industries, and a good many minor ones, have reached an extremely high degree of monopolization if the term "monopoly" is used in the broad sense in which it signifies "imperfect competition."

Of Unionization

There is no law of nature which requires that unionization go hand-in-hand with monopolization. As a matter of fact, monopoly thrived in this country for many decades while unions languished. It was precisely the brutal force of the monopolies that prevented labor unions in mass production industries from developing until the advent of the New Deal. But the unions have gained ground rapidly. From a membership of about 3.5 million in 1929, the labor unions have grown to an army of thirteen to fourteen million. Large sectors of the economy, to be sure, are still untouched by union organization. The union

membership of 13 to 14 million compares with 40,918,000 employees in non-agricultural establishments in December, 1946. That is to say, even in the non-agricultural sector of the economy, the unions have so far organized only about one third of their potential membership. But as in an army, it is not the number of union members alone that counts, but strategic position and discipline. That labor unions have invaded nearly all monopolized industries, the key positions of American economy, and that the workers of most of these industries are virtually 100 per cent organized in well disciplined and highly efficient bodies has wide political, sociological and economic significance and offsets somewhat the fact that two-thirds of non-agricultural employees are not yet organized.

A System of Concentrated Economic Forces

Given these tremendously concentrated and organized forces of society on the part of both capital and labor, the salient problem is whether, or how and with what effects a system can work in which these forces alone, in their co-operation and their antagonism, are economically the determining factors as a result of withdrawal of the government as a controlling and regulating factor. This problem is as new as the constellation from which it stems. The labor unions in most mass production industries are scarcely ten years old. In the first few years of their existence, some of them waged spectacular fights—the sit-down strikes were the most dramatic—but the economic power both of the unions and of the industrial monopolies was greatly curtailed by idle capacities of the productive forces of capital and labor. The war remedied this deficiency, but prevented the full use and pressure of the concentrated powers of capital and labor by the intervention of the government. Strict governmental controls over production, prices and wages, as well as heavy war taxation, curbed the economic powers both of capital and labor. Under the exceptional conditions of the war economy, the system of governmental controls achieved an unusually high degree of economic stability despite great increases in production and the incredibly rapid pace with which they were achieved.

The prevailing economic thinking of that time envisaged, even for the postwar period, a full-employment system modeled in certain respects on the war economy pattern. It was widely held that the government after the war, although it would cease to be the main customer of industry, would still continue to function as the ultimate regulating factor whenever regulation might be necessary to secure economic

stability and the full use of all productive forces. The complete disintegration of this economic system under the pressure of the "free enterprise" forces, and ultimately of the electorate itself, created the entirely new situation of an economic system in which two huge class forces face each other without any mitigating or controlling interaction on the part of the Government.

A similar situation was foreseen by Marx. What was not foreseen by him was the survival of a very broad middle-class layer which, although economically rather powerless, has so far held the political balance of power between labor and monopolistic enterprise and determined in the last analysis whether or not, and to what extent, the government shall exert over-all regulating functions. At the last elections in which the influence of the middle classes was dominant the decision fell in favor of non-intervention. Whether, and for how long, this decision can stand and with what consequences will depend on the working of the system of autonomous economic forces and on the political course organized labor will take.

The Inflationary Bias of the Present System

The primary problem for the moment is that of the working of the system of autonomous economic forces, and it is here where the doubts begin. For a system in which industrial prices and wages are substantially determined by the interaction of monopolistic concerns and labor unions is certain to be unstable unless either the industrial concerns and the unions pursue voluntarily the same policy that a controlling government would pursue in order to secure the stability of the system, or unless the government systematically counteracts the autonomous actions of business and labor by consistent economic policy, especially fiscal and credit policies aiming at the preservation of full employment. The instability of the autonomous system results from the power of the monopolistic employers to shift increases in labor or other costs to the consumers and from the power of the labor unions to force wage increases on monopolistic employers regardless of their effect on prices.

That this power has been used on both sides cannot be doubted. The labor unions rightly contended that most of the wage increases which they won after the war could be, or could have been, absorbed by the employers. But there were also instances in which no such restraint was exerted. The leaders of the AFL openly denounced some CIO unions for having contributed to the inflationary spiral by insisting

upon wage increases which could not be absorbed. Conversely, to what extent employers shifted to consumers wage increases which they could have absorbed can be gathered from the Nathan report and from the President's economic report to Congress. Both reports show that corporate net profits in 1946 were startingly higher than in the pre-war period. Except in depression periods, any actions on the part of employers or unions which shift the burden of wage increases to consumers tend to unbalance the economy either by creating an inflationary trend or strengthening an existing inflationary trend.

In other words, it is by no means self-evident that all monopolistic concerns and all labor unions always act in the same way as a government, which attempted to maintain full employment, would act. Nor is it self-evident that when government fails to control the economy, pressure of public opinion achieves the same results as would governmental action. Public opinion after the war has been strangely indifferent to unwarranted price increases by industrial monopolies, but has reacted to the wage fights between employers and unions both vigorously and in a partial way, without regard to considerations of a full-employment policy. The unions have been held primarily responsible by public opinion for the protracted strikes in essential industries, which admittedly involved the danger of temporary breakdowns of the industrial system. It has not been generally realized that strikes as a mass phenomenon signalize disturbances in the economic equilibrium for which the system itself is responsible. In other words, the mass strikes were symptomatic of an inflationary situation which was provoked primarily not by the wage increases, but by the premature relaxation of governmental controls and the establishment of an autonomous system of concentrated economic forces which, in turn, has a propensity for an inflationary price and wage trend.

Anti-Labor Measures Are No Remedy

The remedies that have been widely proposed and which are reflected in the flood of anti-labor bills in the new Congress show lack of understanding of the real problems. There are no serious proposals aiming at curbing the pricing powers of industrial monopolies. What is presented is rather a catalog of anti-labor proposals designed to strengthen the bargaining position of the employers and to weaken that of the unions. These proposals stem from the erroneous belief that it is labor that has abused its power and must be prevented from such abuse in the future. Yet what has actually happened is that the

economic forces both on the employers' and on labor's part have acted autonomously in the absence of a regulating force. This is exactly as they should be expected to act by the advocates of unrestrained free enterprise whose counsel prevailed at the recent Congressional elections.

Whether or not their authors are aware of it, these proposals tend toward a return to the "normalcy" which prevailed prior to the depression of the early 'thirties; that is, a return to an economic and social system in which labor, poorly organized or not organized at all, is faced by powerful industrial monopolies. Such a system would be not only completely undemocratic socially but also unstable economically. While the existing system has an inflationary bias, industrial monopolies without strong labor unions tend toward deflation and depression. For such a situation leads to disproportionately low wages and high profits; that is, toward a situation in which savings are higher than are investment opportunities in view of the low purchasing power for consumer goods.

In a democratic country, labor unions, once they have entrenched themselves in the economy, cannot be crushed by legislative or juridical fiat without crushing democracy itself. It is improbable that this fact will be completely overlooked in Congress, despite the flood of anti-labor bills. Whatever the outcome of the legislative activities of Congress, however, it is not very likely that the constellation of economic power as it has developed in the last few years will be substantially changed.

Other proposals, which have found less enthusiastic reception in Congress, center around the problem of wage determination. To obviate strikes in essential industries, a series of mediation steps is proposed which in the last resort would rest on compulsory arbitration. Advocates of such proposals usually fail to realize that they amount to a governmental control of wages without any counter-balancing control of prices, particularly of monopolistic prices. Big business has in this respect sounder instinct than the advocates of governmental arbitration. Business organizations realize apparently that, in a monopolistic economy, wages in the long run cannot be unilaterally controlled by government without a corresponding governmental control over prices. Sooner or later price control would have to be added. For this reason business organizations are no less vigorously opposed to compulsory arbitration of labor disputes than the unions. This may account for the coolness in Congress towards proposals of this nature.

The crux of the matter, which is not understood by the advocates

of legislation designed to control labor relations without instituting governmental control of prices and production, is that a system of concentrated economic forces is unstable in any event unless the government either has the ultimate control over its actions, or is at least willing and able to counteract any autonomous action which tends to unbalance the economic equilibrium. Theoretically this can be done in most instances even without any price and wage controls. The inflationary bias which is more or less inherent in such a system can be counteracted by governmental measures in the field of economic policy, particularly in that of fiscal and credit policy. Thus an inflationary trend can be compensated for by tax increases, reduction in the public debt, and a policy of restrictions on speculative and consumer credits.

The outcome of the elections has made it extremely unlikely that a compensatory policy of this kind will be pursued. Even the preceding Congress was in a rush to reduce taxes immediately after the war, although the inflationary trend was already manifest. The majority party in the present Congress has announced its firm determination to outdo the last Congress in tax reductions, despite the accelerated pace of inflation. The situation is similar in the field of credit policy.

A sound credit policy in an inflationary situation requires a reduction in the public debt, but must be watchful at the same time that the money flowing back from the government to the public is not used for speculative purposes and that the inflationary trend is not strengthened by expansion of consumer credit. Again, under a Republican majority in Congress prospects for such a restrictive credit policy are slim.

Since even these elementary rules of fiscal and credit policy are not generally taken into account under the rule of a conservative legislature, there is little hope that the broader rules of a full-employment policy will be applied,—rules which require that government policy be ready, if necessary, to go beyond fiscal and credit policy, by including controls over prices and wages and by a vast expansion of public works in the event that situations arise in which no other means are immediately effective to check inflationary or deflationary trends.

The Unavoidable "Dip"

Under such circumstances the economic prospects can easily be predicted. Unless faced by a very serious economic unbalance, the present Congress will not be inclined to apply stern measures for stabilizing the economy. Since the balance of political power has shifted

to the right, there will be a strong tendency to exploit popular indignation over mass strikes in essential industries in an attempt to shift also the balance of economic power between capital and labor to the right by anti-labor legislation of one kind or another. Such a policy will in no way contribute to a more stable economy. All indications are that the inflationary trend will run its course until the "dip" (as the Board of Economic Advisers has euphoniously termed the expected economic recession) comes.

It is questionable, however, whether the dip will be deep enough to bring about a reversal in the present popular mood which favors a *laissez-faire* policy. The long-range upswing tendencies of the economy are still so strong that they will in all likelihood catch and reverse the downward trend at an early stage. The postponed effective demand for durable consumer goods and capital equipment at home and abroad is still so great that orders in hand will keep a large portion of American industry going for several years even if the expected "dip" should somewhat curtail purchasing power.

Yet this does not mean that after the dip the ship of American economy will enter calm waters. As long as the present constellation of economic powers, which has been established by the withdrawal of the government from the economic scene, persists, the unbalancing forces are bound to be stronger than the balancing factors. Any equilibrium which will follow the dip is therefore certain to be of short duration.

What Will Labor Do?

The perspectives are not too encouraging from the labor point of view. Even if the labor organizations feel strong enough to withstand without serious damage the onslaught of anti-labor legislation, they cannot be cheered by the prospect of an unbalanced economy which has been brought about by the conservative political victory. The question arises why organized labor, which economically is such a powerful factor, has done so little to prevent this victory and whether it is likely to do more in the future to bring about a change for the better?

The answer lies in an analysis of the political structure of this country. Until recently it appeared to be more advantageous for organized labor to exert political power within the framework of the existing two-party system than to form its own party. These advantages seemed obvious as long as the labor unions were numerically weak. Their ranks were swelled in a period in which the progressive wing of the

Democratic Party controlled the administration of the country. The more or less open alliance of organized labor with this administration and with the political organization behind it was the natural consequence. It can be shown statistically that from 1938 on, except in the solid South, the bulk of the urban and rural middle-class voters began to desert the Democratic Party. From then until the death of Roosevelt the Democratic Party outside the South was chiefly dependent on the labor vote. It would be erroneous to contend that in that period organized labor failed to exert its full share of political power.

In view of the conservative character of the Southern Democrats, however, the balance of political power in the country was certain to be unstable. This became apparent in the last few pre-war years. During the war, with a political truce imposed upon the nation, the struggle between progressive and conservative forces was suspended. With the end of the war, the compelling reason for the cohesion between the conservative and progressive wings of the Democratic Party disappeared and the administration began to make political concessions to the right in an attempt to preserve its Congressional support. It was this political turn that rendered labor homeless and comparatively inactive politically, with the natural result that the conservative forces won the elections.

The lesson of the elections is that when organized labor withdraws from the political scene, both the balance of economic power and the equilibrium of the economic system are disturbed. The resulting political vacuum is too dangerous to be tolerated for long. It cannot be foreseen whether organized labor will seek a solution by working for rejuvenation of the Democratic Party or by forming a party of its own. The split in the labor movement and the Communist influence on a part of it are complicating and disturbing factors. But in any event, to the double blows of anti-labor legislation and economic instability organized labor may be expected to react vigorously, and ultimately with full use of its great potential political power.

CHALLENGE OF SOVIET CONQUEST

George Denicke

Nineteen forty-five was the year of victory. And 1946 until now—the period of what? Not of peace certainly and scarcely of armistice. It seems that the war goes on—only in changed form. The "peace" we have is (to take liberties with Clausewitz) a continuation of the war by other means. For, strictly speaking, the war did not end with the close of hostilities; it has not ended yet. The processes of conquest have not stopped. The reference is not figurative. I mean *actual* conquest carried out by military and political means typical for time of war.

Military occupation is not necessarily conquest. Occupying forces may come and go without subjugating the states they occupy. Following World War I, the Allied forces occupied parts of Germany for several years, but Germany did not cease to be an independent state. Today American and British armed forces are not conquering Germany, Austria or Italy. They did not attempt to conquer France, Belgium, Holland or Denmark. Even the sharpest critics of British policy in Greece (Communists excepted) do not affirm that the British are conquering that country. Nor is the U.S. conquering Japan, Korea or China. In all such cases occupation may, and usually does, serve political purposes, but it is not part of a pattern of conquest.

The same cannot be said, however, about the aims and methods of Soviet Russian occupation. We are told that the expansionist policy of the Soviet Union is not "imperialist," but is dictated by legitimate desires of the USSR to create a buffer "zone of security" contiguous to her frontiers. Let us suppose that a similar argument were advanced in relation to England. Its natural "security zone" is Northern France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Norway. At the end of the war there

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was no power prepared to *force* the British out of those countries. Yet they not only did not try to stay but evidently never had the slighest intention of remaining to impose upon these peoples "friendly governments," to dominate their administrative, political, economic and cultural life.

Contrast, for instance, the situation in two allied countries—Belgium and Poland. Belgium is again an independent state with her territory intact. The Belgians have their internal controversies about the monarchy, but imagine the British ordering the Belgian people to accept a British civil service man or intelligence officer as their King! Poland, on the other hand, has been forced to cede to Russia a substantial part of her eastern territory including even Lvov, a city of particularly great importance, historically and otherwise, to the Poles. The Chief of State in the new Poland has been a Soviet citizen for more than two decades and a functionary of the Soviet secret police. Contrast the Belgian elections with the "free elections"[1] in Poland, "protected" in the last instance by Russian troops.

Recent history is less one of peacemaking than of systematic conquest on one side and weak resistance on the other. Neither peace treaties nor the United Nations can be expected to stop this conquest. Recently the New York *Times* published in chronological form "Fifty Events in UN's History." Contrasting headlines, one year apart, tell a significant story:

April 25, 1945:

DELEGATES OF FIFTY NATIONS OPEN SAN FRANCISCO UN MEETING TO DRAFT CHARTER

April 23, 1946:

COUNCIL VOTES TO RETAIN IRAN ON AGENDA. GROMYKO WARNS RUSSIA WILL NOT DISCUSS SUBJECT

June 26, 1945:

S. F. CONFERENCE ENDS WITH SIGNING OF UN CHARTER

June 26, 1946:

RUSSIA USES VETO THREE TIMES IN ONE DAY ,TO DEFEAT PROPOSALS IN SECURITY COUNCIL RELATING TO SPAIN

Two years ago, in an article published in the quarterly review[2] of the American Labor Conference on International Affairs, an organization which from the outset opposed the veto, I wrote: "In all probability a security system which required such unanimity including such veto provisions would not work in the really important instances."

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[1]See "Comment" in this issue of *Modern Review*.

[2]Voting Procedure in the Security Council," *International Postwar Problems,* January, 1945.

As yet it has not worked in *all* instances with the exception of the decision to send a commission to the Balkans to investigate Greek frontier clashes. When this decision was "unanimously" adopted on December 19, 1946, the Russian member of the Council for the first time permitted his abstention to be interpreted as not constituting a veto. This event added much buoyancy to the hopes of those wishful-thinkers who are always so eager to believe that Russia is changing her political line and becoming co-operative.

Experience since the beginning of 1946 (the Security Council was created on January 12th of that year) demonstrates what could easily have been foreseen; namely, that the veto gives every permanent member of the Council power to nullify any decision which fails to conform to his wishes. The full consequences of the December 19th decision will not be known until later, but thus far the activity of the Security Council has been fruitless. Because of the veto? Yes, though the veto provision itself is not the reason but rather an expression of irreconcilable tendencies: one of peacemaking, the other conquest.

The security system has not worked. The guerilla war against Greece continues. The Chinese civil war goes on too and no one in the Council dares raise the question of this allegedly internal strife, although in reality it involves a basic conflict between China and the Soviet Union. The fact that Soviet armed forces left Iran and the Russian Government sacrificed its Iranian Quislings was not the result of any action of the Security Council but stemmed from internal difficulties in the Soviet Union itself.[1] For the time being, Moscow does not dare go too far. It is not prepared to become involved in too serious conflict exacting too much effort. This is what underlies the pretended concessions of Soviet diplomacy, which actually does not concede anything but ceases obstruction when to continue it would require more force than it is yet prepared to employ. In short, Moscow concedes what it cannot get, or rather cannot get yet. By these "concessions," it prevents too spectacular a fiasco for the UN which still may be of use from the standpoint of Russian foreign policy and propaganda.

Real history is not made in the councils of the UN or by elab-

[1] An article in the New York *Times*, January 22, 1947, deals with one of these possible internal difficulties. Drew Middleton, Moscow correspondent for the *Times*, calls attention to the first official statement of the General Statistics Board of the new Five-Year Plan which states that the worst drought in fifty years hit the Ukraine in spring of last year and admits that as a result the harvest of grain crops, sunflower seed and sugar beets was "much lower" than in 1945. The Soviet Government was forced to take emergency measures to relieve suffering and "to economize on consumption of food," according to this official report.

orate speeches which have become more or less transparent tactical maneuvers. The Mikhailovich trial in Belgrade was an event of real history as the culmination of a series of acts of Allied betrayal and, alas, not the last act in the subjugation of an allegedly liberated country. One such trial is of greater historical importance than scores of solemnly signed agreements. Physical suppression of opposition is more than barbaric revenge. It is part and parcel of the deep transformation being imposed on Soviet dominated areas.

The methods of this transformation and of the Soviet policy of conquest generally may vary essentially in different countries and even in the same country during different phases of development. There are not only certain well defined types of activity but also various intermediate or mixed forms. It is possible, however, to distinguish clearly three principal phases by which Soviet conquest is carried out. There are also three zones in each of which the corresponding methods are applied.

The three principal methods are: (1) direct annexation; (2) subjugation by imposing "friendly governments," and (3) preparation for conquest by the activity of Communist "fifth columns." During 1946, the Soviet Union used all three methods for consolidating its domination or influence over territories already acquired rather than in order to acquire new territory.

In Europe, previous to 1946, the Soviet Union had annexed the Baltic States and parts of Finland, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania. In Asia it had acquired Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, and had completed the annexation of Outer Mongolia and Jannu-Juva. The annexed regions, whether called independent or not, are incorporated into the structure of the Soviet Union. They are behind the iron curtain. Nevertheless, it is well known that the processes of their Sovetization were carried out in a most ruthless fashion. All opposition was suppressed, "socially alien elements" liquidated—often physically,—whole populations transferred, hundreds of thousands of persons sent to concentration camps situated in the northern reaches of Siberia. Many members of the UN evidently still consider the Baltic States to be independent countries. This country, for instance, did not recognize their annexation by the Soviet Union. The other annexations also are not yet legally recognized. But no one raised his voice to ask what happened in the unilaterally annexed regions: the annexations were considered a *fait accompli.* Of course nothing could be changed by protests or legal objections, but the fact that principles of law were not even invoked establishes a menacing precedent.

The countries of the second group have remained formally independent. The policy of the occupying power has been to assure Soviet domination in those countries by imposing "friendly governments" controlled by the Communist parties. A book would be needed to describe the development in each of those countries. The occupation policy was—and still is—partly negative: to suppress all resistance; partly constructive: to transform the internal structure of these countries and to merge them into a new Soviet Empire, composed of the Soviet Union with all its satellites. The concept is not new: it was applied in Europe in an attempt to create a "New Order" dominated by Hitler. In this case, however, the creation of the "New Order" is intended as a phase of world revolution in the sense that this is understood by Stalin and his followers. And this is a *revolutionary* conquest because of the tremendous transformation taking place in every country where the Soviet policy succeeds.

The notion of revolution has to be advanced very cautiously, however, in this connection. It is possible to distinguish some democratic trend in all early revolutions. This trend was present even if the revolution did not result in establishment of democracy. It resulted at least in broadening the base of the ruling classes. When, for instance, the feudal aristocracy was forced to share with the middle class influence over the government, it was a step towards democracy. Nothing similar is happening in the countries in which the Soviet policy is introducing its "true democracy": the ruling class is formed from above and actually imposed from outside, in the last instance by the armed forces of the occupying power. This is a new type of revolution which emerged after World War I. These are the totalitarian revolutions of our times.

The Soviet Union, as the power directing those revolutions in its domination zone, has gained important victories, but also has suffered some serious defeats. In some countries (Hungary) it did not find sufficient Communist support and was forced to use a greater degree of open violence than was intended. The situation is still more difficult in countries with joint Russian-Western occupation (Germany and Austria), where the situation may be described as a transitional stage from the second to the third group.

The most important of these, of course, is Germany—most important for the Soviet Union as well as for the Western democracies. The domination of the whole of Germany would open the way for Soviet domination of the entire European continent. The successful development of Germany towards democracy would help check Soviet Russian

expansion, if not stop it completely. Here we can only mention this problem which deserves a separate article. The speeches by Byrnes, especially at Stuttgart, indicated an essential change of American policy (if formerly there had been one!). Various elections in Germany reveal that Communist influence is limited primarily to the Russian zone. This fact is of essential importance for Soviet policy in the countries of the third group, especially France.

West of the Russian zone, Germany may be considered as belonging to this third group; that is, to the countries in which a direct domination by the Communist parties is as yet out of the question (the same situation exists in Austria). In Western Germany the Communists are only a small minority party. The presence of the Allied troops bars recourse to violence which otherwise would take place with help of the NKVD and, if necessary, of the Red Army from the Russian zone. This means that Italy and France—both countries where the Communist position is very strong—are practically isolated from the compact Communist dominated bloc in Eastern Europe. This situation is reflected in Soviet policy, especially insofar as France is concerned.

In countries of the third group the task of the Communist parties is to participate in the governments, to occupy as many posts as possible in central and local administration, to infiltrate the police force and army; and, on the other hand, to disorganize and paralyze all agencies and organizations which might become centers of resistance against Communist conquest of the state apparatus. In France many Frenchmen, as well as most foreign observers, are convinced that the French Communist Party together with the Communist dominated Federation of Labor (CGT) could now take power through a *coup d'etat.* Moscow has not ordered the French Communists to undertake this, however. On the contrary, it appears that they are advised to be cautious, moderate, and "democratic" in their propaganda. At least one of the reasons, if not *the* reason, for this is the isolation of France from Soviet Russia and the Soviet Russian zone of domination. In general, in countries of the third group, Communist conquest is not the immediate task. This is rather a zone of preparation, in which the Communists seek to prevent every political and social consolidation, to hinder rehabilitation, to stimulate uneasiness and insecurity. Moreover, Soviet policy in this zone is more cautious also because of controversial problems involving France and Germany. These problems have to be taken into account by the Communist parties in both countries in order that French Communists may pose as French nationalists

and Germany Communists as German nationalist.

Despite all this there are those who affirmed that Soviet policy in Europe—and in Asia too—is dictated exclusively or primarily by considerations of Russian security. In his recent book,[1] Edward Hallett Carr, well known for his editorials in the London *Times,* states: "It cannot seriously be questioned that security is, and will remain for some time to come, the predominant motive of Soviet policy in Europe." Perhaps the point is how one defines security. According to the Soviet concept the requirements of security seem to be unlimited. Theoretically, the most perfect zone of security is the whole world. A broad and aggressive concept of security leads logically to a program for world domination, or—world revolution. Hitler never actually formulated a program for world domination by Germany. He talked in terms of living space for 250 million Germans. But he also worried about "security" for Germany.

An opinion, very different from Mr. Carr's, is to be found in a recent book by General John R. Deane,[2] former head of the U.S. Military Mission to the USSR. Writes General Deane:

> In my opinion there can no longer be any doubt that Soviet leadership has always been motivated by the belief that Communism and Capitalism cannot co-exist. Nor is there any doubt in my mind that present-day Soviet leaders have determined upon a program toward imposing Communism on those countries under their control and, elsewhere, creating conditions favorable to the triumph of Communism in the war against Capitalism which they consider to be inevitable.

The question may be asked: Why speak so much of Soviet Russia in dealing with the historical meaning of recent international events? The answer: Because the history of this period in its international aspects is completely dominated by the policy of Soviet Russia which has the only positive and forceful foreign policy.

However the same General Deane also writes:

> In a sense we are fortunate that the issue is so clearly drawn. Never before in our own history have we had so much advance warning of the peril which confronts us. Never has it been more important to take preventive measures to avoid the dangers which lie ahead and to prepare to overcome them if they prove to be unavoidable.

The only way to stop aggression before it begins is to convince the aggressor that his undertaking is hopeless and suicidal.

Much has been said about a policy of "firmness and patience," but there has been more patience than firmness—at least in the first

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[1] *The Soviet Impact on the Western World,* Edward Hallett Carr. The Macmillan Company, N. Y. $1.75.

[2] *The Strange Alliance,* John R. Deane. Viking Press, N. Y. $3.75.

half of the period under discussion. When more firmness was shown, Soviet diplomacy avoided a showdown. There is no evidence, however, that this change of tactics means retreat from the fundamental principles and goals of Soviet policy. Nevertheless the alleged concessions produced a new crop of illusions—the same illusions which for too long have fostered appeasement of Moscow.

We are not nearer to peace today politically than we were in January, 1946. It is our good luck if we are not nearer to war. Does this mean that the peace is lost? The peace was lost even during the war. It was lost at Teheran and Yalta. Now the task is not to safeguard the peace we don't have, but to win it back. This task requires not merely tremendous material but also great moral forces. On this point I am in complete agreement with Edward Hallett Carr, when he writes:

> Like other great historical movements, it [the Bolshevik revolution] owed its success not merely to its own power and to the enthusiasm which it generated among its disciples, but to the inner crumbling of the order against which it was directed. [And in the western world] the ideas which the Soviet impact brought with it fell on well-prepared ground; the men of every nation who helped to spread communist ideas in the west were not as a rule venal "fifth columnists" (though these no doubt existed), but men who sincerely saw in these ideas a cure for the evils of their own country.

Unfortunately, the question is still open whether or not democracy has the will to build a moral wall strong enough to defend itself against the political and moral impact of the Bolshevism. This question is the "to be or not to be" of Western civilization.

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

EDITOR'S NOTE: This section on the international press is planned as a permanent feature of Modern Review. *No attempt is made at complete coverage of the world press, a task which is clearly beyond our scope. Rather it is our aim to present in some detail articles from the foreign press (also occasionally perhaps from the American press) which seem to us of particular interest and significance. In these digests every effort is made to retain the spirit and, in a broad sense, even the letter at crucial points of the original article.*

Soul-Searching on the French Left

Discussion of the influence of Stalinism on European thought and attempts to fix the role of the European intellectuals in relation to the great political currents of our day have been tardy and lagging in France. Only recently has the moral terror exercised by Stalinism been lifted sufficiently to permit free discussion

An article by Claude Bourdet in *Octobre*[1] outlines the dilemma of the European intellectual Left.

Bourdet sketches the main trends of development in European intellectual circles in recent years. For centuries an alliance existed between the more gifted writers and intellectuals and those political movements striving for liberation. After the beginning of the 20th century, socialism became more and more the instrument of this struggle. But socialism remained engaged primarily in day-to-day struggles with the State. It lacked the glamour to attract the liberal intellectuals on a broad scale.

The October Revolution provided this glamour. Its call to the oppressed of the world could scarcely fail to be heard by those concerned with the need for a basic change in the condition of man.

For over two decades an increasing number of intellectuals turned toward the Russian experiment. Some like Malraux and Gide, joined the Communist Party. Others, though unable to go so far, "looked with a combination of revulsion, hope and uneasiness toward the USSR—collosal and as yet half-finished image of the future."

A counter-tide set in more than a decade ago, however, beginning with the publication of Gide's *Return from the USSR*. The Moscow trials, the rise in the Soviet Union of a sharply outlined new bureaucratic caste, the twists and turns of the Party line, the emergence of a Soviet academic style in the arts,—all these developments demonstrated to many intellectuals that the new society, though it might be called socialism in a purely technical sense, lacked the liberating potential claimed for it.

The main reaction to the collapse of the Soviet myth was a sense of utter frustration. Russia could no longer

[1] *Ermitages et Jaggernauth ou le dilemme de l'intelligence,* OCTOBRE, Paris. November 16, 1946.

be regarded as the keeper of the Holy Grail. On the other hand, the rising tide of fascism and, after 1944, the restoration of capitalism on a world scale discouraged hope from the other side also. Since the Russian experiment had degenerated so rapidly, did the world make any sense whatever? Existentialism might have developed independently of the disgust of the left-wing intellectuals with Russia's bureaucratic degeneration, but it would have taken a different course and would not have gained such a following. Within the confines of this new philosophy, many intellectuals create hermitages, comfortable for some of them but tragic for the more gifted. Will the latter be able, without developing a soul-shattering guilt complex, to abide long in a universe without possible redemption, inaccessible to hope? Bourdet doubts it.

To escape the tragic sterility that is implicit in such a position, others submit to being crushed by the Stalinist juggernaut, sacrificing all the values they once cherished. A number of the more conscientious Communist intellectuals now know well the real meaning of bureaucratic oppression. They know its destructive power and how it endangers the future. Still they believe that the ground, fertilized by blood and tears, over which pounds the Russian tank, will provide the material basis for ultimate freedom. At a deeper level of consciousness some of them feel obscurely that the juggernaut may eventually destroy everything in its path, but nevertheless it is the vehicle of history.

It would seem, therefore, that for most European intellectuals there remains but the choice between two types of resignation—a choice between hermitage or juggernaut, between yogi and commissar.

While it is impossible to face modern life with the optimism of a Rousseau or Saint Simon, Bourdet concludes, the intellectuals must start again from the beginning, as they did, and attempt to bring a new world to birth. Russia can no longer be considered the expression of, or support for, the principles of human freedom. Yet Russia is the main bulwark at the moment against total domination of the world by capitalism which, in turn, plays an important role in stemming the expansionist thrusts of the Russian bureaucracy. The equilibrium is precarious, every rupture compromises the future, and the gains of either camp are never victories for the cause of human freedom. But within the relatively small geographic space and unforseeable interval of time that is left, a socialist Europe is trying to take form. Though set upon from all sides, torn and bleeding, it must attempt to win the future. Even if either of the two giants who threaten to crush it succeed, "the most fragmentary and partial victories that it may win for the cause of freedom meanwhile will influence far more profoundly the future of history than the highest perfections of servitude."

Nationalization in Britain: Three Views

Publication of the British Labour Government's plan for nationalization of inland transport has touched off a lively controversy in the British press which throws considerable light on the problems of nationalization generally.

The *New Statesman and Nation* sums up the case for the Government.[1] Cheap and efficient transport is a prime necessity of modern industry, particularly for transportation of

[1] *New Statesman and Nation,* December 14, 1946.

heavy bulk goods. Railways are the main carriers of such goods. On the ground that rail transport was cheaper and more efficient, the State placed obstacles in the way of growth of motor road services before the war whenever their competition threatened the railways. The deterrents to growth of road competition, however, failed to accomplish any rational division between road and rail traffic. It became increasingly evident that a coordinated system, which could be achieved only under planned and unified control, was needed.

The Government's Transport Bill, says the *New Statesman and Nation,* is the answer to this need. Although there are to be separate managing executives for the main branches of inland transport, the control of policy and finance is to be entrusted to a single Transport Commission, which will be by far the largest business undertaking in Great Britain. Such a vast concern clearly could not be justified if the need for unification were not so evident. The Transport Commission will have to exert very strong control in its early stages in order to insure rational division of activities. Later it should be possible to allow more autonomy.

The question, of course, is whether a unified system will yield improved service at lower cost. Opponents of the bill, citing the precedent of the Reid Report on coal mining, say that this question should have been studied more carefully before the bill was introduced. The two cases, however, are very different. The problem of the Reid Committee was essentially a problem of engineering to which technical experts could be asked to give objective answers. The problem of rail and road is primarily an economic problem. As such, it has been studied adequately. The demand for an inquiry is simply a maneuver.

The terms proposed for compensation for railroad shareholders are being vigorously attacked. It is stressed that former shareholders will have their incomes considerably reduced if the bill passes in its present form. But all shareholders have any right to demand is that what they receive in return for their shares shall be of equal market value. To apply any other principle would mean that the State would be paying more for the railroads than they are worth. Saddled with an inequitable capital charge, its chances of supplying cheap and efficient service would then be slim indeed.

The bill, the *New Statesman and Nation* concludes, seems to offer good prospects for improved service to the public. More cannot be said, for no system affords any guarantee of efficiency. Even the highest *technical* skill in management will not spell success unless it is combined with proper regard for the human factor.

The most complete case against the bill in its present form was presented in the London *Economist.*[1] The main issue, declares the *Economist,* is simple. Will the bill give the British community more efficient transport? The onus of proof is on the Government. The Government has as yet not announced any policy that will reduce the slice that transport takes out of national income without reducing the service it performs. The automatic effects of nationalization on industrial efficiency are certainly not favorable; it has to be justified by other means. The case for coal was fairly clear, but what is the case for transport? These questions have not been answered satisfactorily. And on the answers de-

[1] *The Economist.* December 7, 1946.

pends whether the bill is a piece of economic statesmanship or a piece of economic folly.

Several provisions of the bill will tend to increase costs and lower efficiency. The bill will not merely eliminate all competition but even healthy emulation that comes from the existence of a variety of organizations even if they are not formally competing. The bill will create administrative organisms of gigantic size which, whether publicly or privately managed, go beyond the point of diminishing returns in administrative efficiency. The nationalized industry will certainly become subject to political influences.

One benefit should be noted. The sum of money transport users have to provide to service the transport capital represented by the railways will be reduced, possibly as much as 20 million pounds a year as a result of the confiscatory nature of the compensation scheme. But the sum of money involved is not enough to prove the case for greater efficiency.

There is a theoretical case for nationalization—a justification for saying that the nation has more inland transport facilities than it needs and that a thorough-going rationalization may result in a great saving. On paper, this is a credit entry which should more than offset the inescapable disadvantage of elephantiasis and monopoly. But this has never been presented as more than a theoretical argument. This is the reason, concludes the *Economist,* why a full-scale inquiry should be undertaken before the bill goes further.

An article in the *Socialist Leader*[1] by a trade union leader presents sharply some of the criticisms of the bill that have arisen in some union and left-wing circles.

The undertaking outlined in the bill must be self-supporting; it has to create sufficient revenue to pay its way from the start—a rather bad beginning for an allegedly Socialist government. No provision is made in the bill for representation of trade unionists at any administrative level. It can be argued that this can be taken care of later by regulation, but it would be more reassuring to see it accepted as a principle in the bill itself. There is no vestige of industrial democracy in the bill and this comes as a bitter blow to those trade unionists who were hoping for an improvement on the Coal Bill. The role of workers in the new set-up is still to sweat and toil.

Members of the all-powerful Transport Commission are to be appointed officials, supposedly experts. There are no qualifications in the bill that they are to have public-spirited inclinations, or that organizations of transport workers and technicians are to have any voice in selection of Commissioners. The worst railway boss the workers ever had could qualify for the Commission under the basis of selection provided by the bill.

The bill makes no provision for new negotiating machinery in labor disputes nor for giving additional powers to local committees. Men who do the actual work of running the railways should be given some degree of responsibility. The only way this can be done under the bill is by putting them in charge of depots and stations. The administrative machinery should include workers in order that their practical experience be utilized and their good will secured. Failing this, the Transport Bill will be only another piece of legislation.

[1] "A Worker's Plan for Transport," Will Ballantine, *Socialist Leader,* December 14, 1946.

Brave New World

It is a curious characteristic of our day that some of the most basic and valid criticism of modern trends toward regimentation and sacrifice of the individual to the demands of the all-powerful State comes from the conservative camp. Thus André Siegfried, member of the French Academy and among the best minds of French sociologists and economists, a man who is clearly a conservative, provides us with a diagnosis of our times in an article "*Un Monde Nouveau*"[1] which is certainly an important and notable contribution to current discussion on the Left.

Mr. Siegfried begins by outlining the unbalance that two world wars have brought to the equilibrium of our world. Nothing is in its accustomed place any more. The relations of man to man have been violently upset. Even our ideas of the universe and the laws governing it have been so altered that the bases of morality and methods of reasoning have been nothing, or almost nothing, out of our past experience can serve as guide. When we look around us, with anguish but not without curiosity, we feel the elementary astonishment that a man might feel who comes out of a bomb-shelter after a bombardment, wondering what part of the once fashaken. We face a world in which miliar landscape remains.

Geographically, we now live in a world of which Europe is no longer the center. Ideologically, we have come to realize that we are no longer living in the nineteenth century. We only now are beginning to visualize the full stature of this new century which differs so basically from its predecessor. Our fathers (and we ourselves in our youth) believed in progress and could not imagine looking for the Promised Land except in the future. Now we may well ask ourselves whether it did not rather exist in the past.

After a brief summary of the main characteristics of the nineteenth century, which for him was above all the century of liberalism, M. Siegfried describes the revolution that has taken place. The conditions of political authority have been transformed. Total war has placed in the hands of government a power of such magnitude—not only in political and military matters, but also in the technical, financial, economic and social sphere —that not only private interests are unable to regain the initiative but are, in fact, being absorbed by the collectivity. The State has gained its power during a period of upheavel and struggle, but it will not relinquish it now. On the contrary, it attempts to augment it, exploiting human weakness for bread and circuses (modern version read "ration coupons, cinema and sports") as well as the elementary thirst of the masses for equality to this end. The masses are incapable of using their tremendous potential power. We live in an age of large-scale organization. The masses delegate their power globally to the governments. Thus one arrives at dictatorship and the servile state within a political framework which, because of habit, one continues to call "democratic."

It appears that this new slavery is accepted without pain. The modern individual apparently does not want personal responsibility. He craves for the guiding hand of the State. Security has become his main preoccupation.

Moreover, modern production methods no longer favor individual ini-

[1] *Revue de Paris*. Paris. November, 1946.

tiative and personal liberty. We have outlived the age of the artisan and passed through the age of the machine dominated by the engineer. But now technical questions have become less important than organizational ones. In this "administrative age" large scale organization of production is a necessity. Unco-ordinated production is no longer feasible. War, by forcing the State to take the lead in industry, has accelerated this trend. Nineteen-fourteen and 1939 were the decisive years. They brought acceleration of the processes of concentration and the predominance of a national point of view under State direction. The huge enterprises attempt to capture control of the state, which, in turn, attempts to dominate and absorb the great enterprises. State controls become more and more all-embracing. It becomes impossible to establish limited spheres: one for the operation of free enterprise, the other for State activities. The system of checks and balances of a liberal order tend to disappear.

Under these conditions every question tends to become an administrative one and, therefore, indirectly political. Governmental solutions must be proposed for everything. There must be decrees, laws, ukases. Hygiene and lodging, food, labor-management relations, industrial production,—all these are questions that must be resolved collectively since they can no longer be solved by private initiative. We spend our lives in a rat race of bureaucratic and administrative routine.

On the other hand, the individual gains something in the process. He is no longer simply a factor in price calculation — the various union and social reform movements have seen to that. But what the individual gains in one way he loses in another. Society will stagnate if no new outlet for individual initiative is found. Coming generations will have to seek a new equilibrium. But if the individual is finally sacrificed to the cause of technical progress, humanity will retrogress.

M. Siegfried then attempts to evaluate the impact that new means of communication and transport have on the world. He comes to the conclusion that only major powers can now hope to hold their own. Eight to ten million square kilometers of "living space" and 100 million inhabitants are necessary to qualify as a major power. That is the reason that the United States and Russia, whole continents, are now in position to supersede the tiny outpost of the Asiatic continent that for four centuries dominated world affairs. All smaller political bodies must federate in order to survive. Europe can no longer lead Western civilization. The center of gravity of the world has been displaced and there now exist two centers: North America and a so-to-speak sixth continent which may be called "Eurasia."

The nineteenth century had almost achieved global economic unity, but now the world tends to split up into huge politico-economic blocs which are strictly compartmentalized, powerfully armed both militarily and economically, and either totalitarian or tempted by inherent necessity to become so. Neither goods nor man can circulate freely. Life has become collective. The individual is isolated and must integrate himself within the framework of the hyperstrophic State. "The State," wrote Paul Valery, "is an enormous, frightening and debile being,—a Cyclopean, maladroit child, offspring of the union of Force and Right and engendered by their contradictions. . . . The State, friend of everybody in general and enemy of everyone in particular!" *("L'Etat, ami de tous, ennemi de chacun . . .")*

The moral retreat in this century of iron and blood is frightening. Humanism appears only as a rear-guard action. Our technical advances are amazing; the engineers solves all problems presented to them. But new problems of another type, moral problems, multiply so rapidly there is no time to deal with them. Every technical solution creates new moral and social questions. Victory over nature is thus never total victory. The machine obeys us, but at the very moment of our most splendid mechanical triumphs, civilization moves backward, adopting political and economic techniques which can only be described as "barbaric."

It would be silly to pretend that we can return to the past. The conquests of the machine are decisive. But man must find a way to adapt himself to his new technical, economic, social and political environment. This adaptation will force a revision of our morality—a process in the course of which the position of the individual in relation to the group will have to be re-defined. To maintain efficiency of production while safeguarding the independence and integrity of the individual—this is the problem. Let us not harbor any illusions as to its import. The question is simply whether or not man is to survive.

Stalin's Secret Army

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is a digest of an article written for the Socialist Courier (Sotsialistitchesky Vestnik), *a Russian-language magazine published in New York, and appearing in its January,* 1947, *issue. The article was written by a refugee-lieutenant of the NKVD (Russian secret police) army who had written a prior contribution for the* Socialist Courier, *"Political Prisoners During the War," and which was published in its August,* 1946, *issue. Worried that the NKVD would be able to trace the authorship of these pieces and strike at his relatives in Russia, the lieutenant, despite the fact that he authorized their publication, has since committed suicide.*

Inside the USSR there is a special army with its own status, a general staff, a separate organization of supplies and with various kinds of arms, including tanks, planes, etc. In the first years of the war with Germany, this NKVD army was stationed far behind the lines, despite the grim situation at the front. This was because the supreme task of NKVD troops consists in safeguarding the Communist regime against any internal opposition. During the war, Stalin considered the threat from this direction more imminent than at any other time, and accordingly the NKVD army was increased beyond its former size. The task of beating back the enemy assault was given to the Red Army. The NKVD army's objective was to hold in check the Russian people, not the German Army.

We were better fed than the Red Army. Our supplies never ran short, not even in days of dire peril. In the NKVD army even the private soldiers received three-course dinners with fruit and wine, and the officers' ration, of course, was still better. From 1943 the army personnel as well as NKVD officials received American canned food regularly.

NKVD army recruiting was carried out by local war commissariats from among the draftees in accordance with special regulations. The recruits, bearers of sealed envelopes from local party organizations testifying to care-

ful screening and citing services rendered by the recruit such as spying on colleagues in factories, collective farms, etc., were first segregated. In case a recruit proved unfit for any reason, the recommending organization was held responsible.

The newly recruited NKVD soldier was put through the propaganda mill. For his indoctrination in "political literacy" he received otherwise unobtainable textbooks. If these books ever fell into the hands of a Red Army man, he would be bewildered by their difference from the books used for his education. The NKVD textbooks seldom mention the "homeland" and never speak of the Russian people and their interests. They deal only with the Communist Party, with World Communism and its enemies, who must be ruthlessly exterminated. There is, of course, frequent praise of Stalin, to whom every NKVD soldier owes blind obedience.

This education took a year, after which there was a new screening of recruits. The best candidates were assigned to command posts or transferred as agents to the various NKVD departments. The NKVD army numbered over a million men.

Within the NKVD army there are "special units" for special duties: sentry battalions guarding the Kremlin, government and party buildings, party big-shots; convoy units for escorting convicts, execution squads, etc. Members of these special units are the "aristocracy" even among NKVD men. Food and clothing are supplied to them in abundance. They can get away with anything since they are more valued than generals or marshals. "We are for Stalin" or "We serve Stalin personally" are the phrases used habitually by NKVD officers in their talks with their men, and this is what actually matters most for every NKVD official.

During the war, especially in its first two years, there was mounting tension in the ranks of the NKVD as Stalin's "patriotic" and "nationalistic" line became ever more accentuated. The Red Army, with its marshals and generals, was winning increased popularity. The restoration of rank and shoulder-straps and the institution of the Suvorov, Kutuzov and other medals for the Red Army especially aroused the ire of the NKVD. Behind these development, the NKVD saw inauguration of "patriotic reforms" which would undermine its prestige and material privileges. In 1942-43, this frame of mind prevailed to such an extent that Malenkov, Assistant General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, was dispatched to the NKVD troops and assured them, in Stalin's name, that "important changes are not contemplated and will not be enacted." He concluded each speech with the admonition to keep faith with Stalin who would never permit the prestige of the NKVD to suffer.

Malenkov did not explicitly say so, but the main danger to the Party and Stalin was seen as coming from the Red Army. This fact was often mentioned in the talks of political instructors with NKVD men, and was a topic of general conversation among us. To check this danger, the NKVD took special precautions. All the marshals and generals, particularly the most popular among them, were placed under strict observation. Their whole entourage — orderlies, liaison men, chauffeurs, even aids — was honeycombed with secret agents, whose reports were carefully scrutinized and checked since these agents were not trusted either. For each marshal, the Operation Division of the NKVD as-

signed a special officer who collected all incoming information and was held "responsible" for "his man." Every step the marshal took was watched, his every word recorded.

NKVD Division Number Five has a sub-division whose business it is to report on the frame of mind of Soviet citizens. Here are centered all the summary reports arriving from the provinces, the army, etc. When such summaries arrive concerning factory workers, members of collective farms, teachers, writers, etc., they are classified. Certain opinions expressed or words used in conversation are considered indicative of Socialist-Revolutionary, Menshevik, or Trotskyite sentiments. Other suspects are registered as "kulaks" or "bandits." The latter category covers anti-Communists lacking any specific ideology or program—the simple "down-with-Communists" variety of opposition.

During the war a special file was set up labeled "war ideology." In this file went all recorded conversations to the effect that the generals and the Red Army "will have a big house-cleaning later" or "will sweep out the Soviet regime." Such records were plentiful.

French Plan for Reconstruction

Current French political debates, deadlocks, and governmental crises have tended to monopolize attention of the American press to the neglect of the basic economic problems which underlie most political controversies. As a result, publication of the so-called Monnet Plan, drawn up by a governmental commission headed by Jean Monnet and officially entitled *Rapport Général sur le Premier Plan de Modernisation et d'Equipement,* received only scant attention in the U.S.

The London *Economist* devotes considerable space to the plan,[1] which is indeed the most important economic document to come out of France since her liberation.

The *Economist* comments that this plan marks the first time that a democratic state has proposed for itself a set of authoritative guide-posts for economic policy-making. The Monnet plan is not a four-year plan along the lines of the familiar Soviet Five-Year Plan pattern. It does not pretend to establish a complete and detailed set of directives for the whole economy. On the contrary, it deals in detail with only six basic economic activities, the six "key resources" which dominate the rest of the economy: coal, power, steel, building materials, agricultural machinery and transport.

The concept of an economy part nationalized, part free is by now a familiar one. The Monnet Plan, declares the *Economist,* introduces a more fruitful and realistic concept embracing a planned sector and an unplanned sector. If provision is made for the key resources, if the chief bottlenecks are eliminated, the whole economy can go forward without requiring control in detail.

The program of gross investment—new capital and maintenance of old capital combined—is set at 3,000 billion francs in four years. This is little on which to base a program of rapid modernization. Moreover, by no means the full amount can go for productive uses. Over one-fifth is earmarked for replacement of destroyed dwelling units and there is an ominous footnote that no allowance has been made for military capital expenditure.

[1]See particularly the *Economist* for December 14, 1946.

It is a great deal to ask of a free community in peacetime that it save a quarter of its income. To use pre-war Britain as a measuring rod, gross capital expenditure in 1938 amounted only to some 14 per cent of gross national income. The *Economist* concludes that M. Monnet is demanding a very great effort from the French people. The report hints at the necessity for postponing any plans for a larger army. Will the hint be taken?[1]

However sympathetic the foreign observer may be, the *Economist* concludes, he cannot help doubting whether there is sufficient confidence in the French state in France itself to carry out such a difficult program.

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[1]If France were to undertake a full-scale colonial war in Indo-China, for instance, the *Economist*'s question would have to be answered in the negative. See "Frenchman's Burden" in "Comment" this issue.